

THE REVIVAL OF ITALY

GEORGE D. HERRON



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THE REVIVAL OF ITALY

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GERMANISM AND THE AMERICAN CRUSADE

THE GREATER WAR

THE REVIVAL OF ITALY,

BY
GEORGE D. HERRON
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PREFATORY NOTE

WHILE these chapters were being written, Giolitti was still the Prime Minister of Italy. But the substance and contention of the chapters are in no whit changed by the change of ministry. It was Bonomi who had largely to do with Giolitti's programme of industrial solution. The motivity of Giolitti and that of Bonomi are identical. The Italian purpose making for industrial democracy, for social conciliation and economic providence, continues its momentous course. Moreover, the intellectual revival and spiritual renewal among the Italian youth are increasing and not decreasing. Hence there is no call for the change of a syllable of definition or a single accent of hope which these chapters have uttered.

A complete translation of all the documents concerning the Revolution of September, 1920, may be found in the *Contemporary Review* of November, 1920.

A translation of Giolitti's Bill to establish workers' control in Italy, with documents and comments appertaining thereto, may be found

in Pamphlet No. 7, Series B, in the Studies and Reports of the International Labour Office in Geneva. The pamphlet bears the date of February 28th, 1921.

The clearest and most synthetic accounts of the Revolution I have seen were written by Mr. Hiram K. Moderwell, a thoroughly equipped American observer and journalist, for different American journals, especially *The Nation* and *The Freeman* of New York.

Let it be said, however, that the accounts of the matter in question are derived chiefly from personal contact with the Revolution, and from conversations I have had with many Italian participants, as well as with Prime Minister Giolitti, Count Sforza, Minister Croce, and other members of the Government. For help given in this direction I feel especially indebted to Signor Giuseppe Prezzolini of Rome. I wish also to express my profound gratitude to his Excellency, Marchese Paulucci di Calboli, Ambassador and devoted lover of his country, for his generous criticism of my manuscript, and of some of the opinions therein expressed.

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TO MY SON,
ELBRIDGE RAND HERRON,
FAITHFUL WORSHIPPER AT THE
SHRINE OF ITALIA

The Revival of Italy

I

THE PERENNIAL QUEST OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE

FROM Augustus till now, the annals of Italy are an essential rehearsal of a single quest—the quest of some clue to the unity of mankind in a Roman-born but universal society. And it is always a society in which authority is reverently identical with liberty—a society, a divine ongoing of human life, upon whose upward way the single man and his total world keep step. Thus the quest speaks always from the consciousness and in the terms of religious adventure. On the part of its inspired ones, in its noblest accents and avowals, it is the quest of some prehensible high secret of social creation, some celestial law of earthly order, some enabling revelation of a heavenly love humanly applicable, whereby freedom and association are happily wedded; whereby the life individual and the life collective are goldenly harmonised; and whence human society, thus for the first time really appearing, dissolves the ancient anarchy conditioning the world.

And the quest is largely peculiar to the Italian people. It is only the prophets of Israel who furnish it with an antecedancy; but never did they so conceive or formulate it, so project it into popular compulsion, as to identify it with the being of the nation. In this they are transcended by the prophets of Italy. Nor only by her individual prophets: her religious initiatives and renewals, the intellectual revivals she has so widely communicated, her high-born revolutions, her worst anarchies even—in fact the whole processional and paradox of her history—are all sourced in this vision and quest of a heavenly society upon the earth, are all predictive of an eventual human perfectionment universal. It is only in the light thereof that Italian history becomes intelligible. Indeed, the quest constitutes the very vocation of Italian history. And it is this that gives Italy a place as unique and prophetic in the last two thousand years as was the place of Israel in the centuries preceding the birth of Christ.

I do not mean that the Italian peoples are always, are even often, conscious of their quest. They rarely know what it is they pursue, what their questions and quarrels are about, what their revelations and revolutions portend. It is but in the great epochal moments of their history that they perceive its meaning, its direction, its goal. But this, of course, is universally true: neither individuals nor nations commonly know the way they take, or the end to which they go. But the uniqueness of Italy is in this—that her high appointment, her

ensuing responsibility for the ultimate weal or woe of the human universe, is proclaimed to her by all the voices really interpretative of the national soul—from Virgil to Carducci, from Saint Francis and Dante to Mazzini and Cavour. Naught else than the vision was Virgil's, and his the quest also, when he reported "those last days that the Sybil sang"—those days wherein "a wondrous race" would descend from high heaven to end the age of iron, "bid a golden dawn upon the broad world," trample out the remaining prints of crimes, and "free the nations from perpetual fear." Nor else than this did the Emperors and the Popes—or the just and great among them—blindly pursue; and of the Italian idea was even Machiavelli's political philosophy but a monstrous perversion. It was this that Saint Francis saw—and this that he knew he had lost—when he sank sweetly but baffled to his death. He had bespoken, this gay troubadour of Christ, and also had he sung, a common love so inclusive as to take in not only the warring cities and their monstrous rulers, but even the natural elements and the creatures that prowled and crawled. Not only were Perugia and Assisi to become brothers and lovers one of another: the wild beast was to repent and to shepherd the village children; the bird and the fish were to join the sun and the moon, the fire and the water, as members of an ineffable communion of man. A revolution reaching to the very roots of life—a practical social philosophy as well—an implied constitution of universal man—were all in that

command of Francis to Brother Wolf to "come, nothing doubting, and establish peace in the name of Jesus Christ." And equally revolutionary to human society (and greatly to be commended to the Powers now parcelling between themselves the peoples and lands of three continents) was the Saint's command to his disciples, made momentarily wrathful by an ill-reception of themselves and their spiritual gifts, to consider and copy that "courtesy of God" which causeth the sun to shine equally upon the just and the unjust, and sendeth rain indiscriminately upon the good and the evil.

The inspiration of Francis was not far, perchance, from the splendid pirates who, according to legend, founded Venice "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," in order that, "for the saving of innocent blood," "a great power, beneficial to the whole world, should arise in a spot strange beyond belief." Nor uninspired were those long generations of strife between city and city, between despot and despot, culminating in the Florentine Renaissance. These strifes all had an economic origin, it is true: each despotism was founded upon the personal possession of great wealth by the despot, and the wars between the cities were motived by loot and destruction. But it is also true that many of the great merchants were at least troubled by civic ideals, and each city populace betimes bestirred by the denunciations and predictions of some flaming reformer or friar. It was "no vulgar issue," says John Addington Symonds, "that joined Guelf and

Ghibelline, Pope and Emperor, in uncontrollable intrigue, tumult and massacre." "No merely egotistic interests were at stake." "Guelfs and Ghibellines alike interrogated the oracle, with perfect will to obey its inspiration for the common good. But they read the utterances of the Pythia in adverse senses. The Ghibelline heard Italy calling upon him to build a citadel that should be guarded by the lance and shield of chivalry, where the hierarchies of feudalism, ranged beneath the daïs of the Empire, might dispense culture and civic order in due measure to the people. The Guelf believed that she was bidding him to multiply arts and guilds within the burgh, beneath the mantle of the Pope, who stood for Christ, the preacher of equality and peace for all mankind, in order that the beehive of industry should in course of time evolve a civic order and a culture representative of its own freely acting forces." And, speaking later of the Florentines, he says: "One thing at least is clear amid so much apparent confusion, that Florence was living a vehemently active and self-conscious life, acknowledging no principle of stability in her constitution, but always stretching forward after that ideal *Reggimento* which was never realised."

But it was Dante, trying to translate the politics of eternity into the terms of temporal power and mediæval theology, who most profoundly predicated the principles of that World-State for which the Empire and the Church had ever and alike striven; for which,

indeed, the nations and religions have all striven, however wilderedly and woefully. It was Dante who most highly foreshowed the World-State—Dante who bespoke that true society of nations, that indissoluble union of the peoples in pursuit of universal good, which the victors in the Great War have so responsibly failed to procure, and upon the early realisation of which the civilised continuance and spiritual existence of humanity depend. It was Dante, too, who proclaimed, even unto a society wherein cupidity and murder had become as fundamental law, that there is "some distinct function for which humanity as a whole is ordained, a function which neither an individual nor a household, neither a village nor a city nor a particular kingdom, has power to perform." And, also, "since it is true that whatever modifies a part modifies the whole, it is plain that amid the calm and tranquillity of peace the human race accomplishes most freely and easily its given work. . . . Whence it is manifest that universal peace is the best of the things which are ordained for our beatitude." And it was Dante who at the same time declared that "the human race is ordered for the best when man is most free." "Upright governments have liberty as their aim, that men may live for themselves; not citizens for the sake of the consuls, nor a people for a king, but conversely, consuls for the sake of the citizens, and a king for his people."

—Coming down to the Risorgimento, no interpretation of that supreme human moment is comprehensive or scientific that regards it as

a mere struggle for national unity. It was in Joseph Mazzini—whom not a few believe to be the most illuminated of the sons of men since Jesus of Nazareth—that the Risorgimento was truly articulate. And in him we see the Italian revolution as more than Italian, more than European : the motive for the liberty and unity of Italy lay in the resultant liberty and unity of mankind. Mazzini struggled to deliver Italy from the Austrians, in order that Italy might deliver the nations from a materialist civilisation already then bearing them down to perdition. He beheld the peoples corrupted and benighted by the materialism of the politician and the capitalist on the one side ; he beheld, on the other side, the world's workers passing under the strong delusion laid upon them by the materialist Messianism of Marx. He conceived it to be the mission of Italy to speak the new word, to take the sure initiative, that would save the nations from the degradation and dissolution, from the tyranny and the slavery inhering in the materialism of both the left and the right. It was an Italy anointed and commissioned from on high, an Italy redemptive among the peoples international, not an Italy content with the mere conquest of her own liberty, that moved Mazzini from the days of his childhood in Genoa until the hour of his lone death at Pisa. It was this that moved the arm of Garibaldi as well ; and it was the failure of Mazzini's motivating vision to fulfil itself, it was the unpreparedness of the official shepherds and the peoples alike for the

social republic for which Garibaldi at first fought, that thereafter filled the hero with foreboding as to the human future, and sombered the days of his passing.

Could Mazzini return to these more evil days of ours, who would hear him? Or if the curious or the alarmed gave ear, to what a strange tongue would they listen? "Are we advancing," he would imperiously ask, "towards anarchy or towards a new mode of things—towards dissolution or towards a transformed life? All ask themselves this question; all could resolve it, if the point of view of each man were not narrowed by his position in some one of the adverse camps. . . . The old generation may be doomed to pass away amid this moral anarchy, but the new already aspires toward a faith, and will not expire without having realised its aspiration." "And it is madness," he would exclaim, "to persist in a struggle between the individual and the forces of the universe—when it may be that the sole liberty of the individual consists in acquiring the power of harmonising his existence with them." It is therefore "time to re-link earth with heaven; to re-unite the finite being with the Infinite Idea, to give human liberty the divine consecration, and—if I may be allowed the expression—confer upon the creature the citizenship of the universe hitherto denied him. . . . An intellectual epoch is now dawning upon us which will comprehend the two; and by accepting them as its point of departure, advance one step farther in that knowledge of God which is the ultimate term

of every human synthesis." Upon the ruins of two former worlds, "the human intellect will raise up a third, destined to solve the enigma of Prometheus and put an end to the grand struggle."

"Humanity is one," he would cry. "God has made nothing in vain, and since there exists a *collective* Being, a multitude of men, there exists *one* aim for them all—one work to be accomplished by them all. Whatever this aim may be, it certainly exists, and it is our duty to endeavour to discover and attain it. Mankind, then, ought to work together in unity and concord, in order that the intellectual power bestowed upon them may receive the highest possible development in the double sphere of thought and action. It is only by harmony, consequently by association, that this is possible."

"Your task," he would conclude, "is to found that Universal Family, to build up the City of God, and unremittingly to labour towards the active progressive fulfilment of His great work in Humanity." And "when each of you, loving all men as brothers, shall reciprocally act like brothers, when each of you, seeking his own well-being in the well-being of all, shall identify his own life with the life of all, and his own interest with the interest of all; when each shall ever be ready to sacrifice himself for all the members of the Common Family, equally ready to sacrifice themselves for him; most of the evils which now weigh upon the human race will disappear, as the gathering vapours of the horizon vanish on the rising of the sun ;

and the will of God will be fulfilled, for it is His will that love shall gradually unite the scattered members of Humanity and organise them into a single whole, so that Humanity may be One, even as He is One."

Such are the logos and the beatitude of the quest, as relentless as it is holy, as perennially new as it is anciently old, forever compelling the Italian nation, devoting it to liberty's largest fulfilments, to God's great ends in humanity. If we press the high quest for its ultimate word, we shall hear Italy held responsible for the quality of the world—for the world's social or spiritual creation—for the creation of a world that is no creation yet, nor yet a thing of the Spirit, but a world without form or mind, consisting chiefly of chaos and the Spirit's raw material. Yet the responsibility is no burden: it is rather an epiphanous empowerment, whence the right and the law and an all-inclusive loveliness lay fast upon the earth—the light and law of social being embracing, as I have written in the beginning, the entire life of man in one concordant and continuous creativity: yet a creativity effecting, just because it proceeds from the total human collectivity, and by the very virtue and precise force of its harmony, an infinite differentiation of persons and actions, showing forth the work of each hand, each mind, in a special and distinctive glory.

The divine empowerment is not alien to the present Italian hour: it is rather the meaning of the precipitate crisis through which Italy is passing. The crisis, if the heart of it be heard,

is naught else than a summons to the Italian people to set a courageous and compelling example of social solution. And the summons is as urgent as the ongoing of God, the opportunity as importuning as the storied gates of heaven. For the nations, broken and bewildered, and cringing under the rule of the harshest reaction whereof history hath knowledge, are seeking a way of salvation from a demented international finance on the one side, from the strong delusion of Moscow on the other side. The urgency of the summons, of the opportunity whose gates may soon be darkened and hushed, lies in this dual advance of the one denial that dooms humanity to moral extinction—the denial of the right of the single man to his own labour, hence to his own body and his own soul. Nor matters it whether the denial be enthroned by the lords of finance or the lords of herded labour—by capitalist government or socialist state. Upon this denial have been based all the tyrannies and all the slaveries of history, all the exploitations of men and nations by the capitalist system of production; and thereupon is based the now destructive exploitation of capitalist industry by a superseding and more parasitic financialism. Upon this selfsame denial the fabled dictatorships of the proletaire are each likewise based. And now, while the Russian delusion leads the workers international into the wilderness of their last despair, the sovereign maniacs of finance grow but the madder, their damnations daily deepening upon all mankind. It is given unto

Italy to prepare the great, the inclusive salvation—to effect, first within her own borders and thence by universal apostleship, that affinity between freedom and association which her poets and prophets all pronounce, which her noblest national efforts all affirm, and the quest whereof has been her divine vocation and her Holy Grail.

II

THE PARADOX OF ITALIAN NATIONAL CHARACTER

ITALY to-day teems with the voices, with the clamours and vital forces—with the turbulent over-life indeed—of a new national springtime. Yet the springtime rises not from the soil of the present, but from sources beneath the foundations of history—sources that were perhaps ancient when Rome was young. And these sources seem always freshly flowing: the springtime of the Italian people seems perennial. For time appears to leave no trace upon this people: the ages do not age Italians. If they are the oldest in the years of their history, they are yet the youngest of the peoples who have made western civilisation. They have experienced every glory of empire, and every evil also; every sort of civic invention, of national adventure, of civic disease and national decay. They have looked up every height of social vision; they have gone down into every depth of social dissolution and savagery. Every religious initiative or degeneration or renovation has run its course with them, and every political or ecclesiastical tyranny or liberation. Indeed, every experiment the human imagination can

conceive has had its day with the Italian communities, has exhausted itself upon the Italian peoples. Yet whatever happens, however whelming the devastations of nature, whatever domestic tyrants or barbarian invaders overcome the land, from each event of wasteful woe or death, however deep or vast, the Italian rises as youthful, as joyous and angry, as foolish and wise, as altogether ready to live and to laugh, to love and to hate, as if human life had begun but yesterday. To the Italian, it is always the morning of the world.

Thus the ongoing of Italy is as the processional of a perpetual paradox; and this is at once the despair and the hope of their history. Just as some of them are to-day killing each other in the streets, in their determination to find social unity and fulfil the law of love, so they probably strove between themselves when the first two or three Italians prehistorically gathered together. Between themselves they have always been fighting: yet they have always been determined upon a spiritual unity of the world. Their whole national life, yesterday and to-day if not for ever, has its setting and continuity in this baffling dualism. And caught in this dualism also, and often enough crucified by it, we behold all the men whom Italy has apotheosed. Julius Cæsar—perhaps the most just and enlightened ruler of two millenniums save England's Alfred and America's Lincoln—could exercise the forgiveness of Christ toward a hypocrite so base and bombastic as Cicero. Virgil sings the arrival

of a Messianic race, and of a resultant peace and goodwill inclusive of even the serpent and the lion, while the world rots with the splendid poison of Augustus. Francis of Assisi, replete with the conscience and the cunning of angels, his saintship the delight of both heaven and earth, springs his revolution—still continuing—amidst the rise of despots whose inhumanities are untellable except in the speech of hell. The great Leonardo broods upon wickedness so prevalent, so profound and apparently irremediable, as to predicate the end of the world in a deluge of divine wrath ; he also ponders a possible world in which economic uncertainty exists not, and wherein every form of genius or activity is free to fulfil itself ; and he was reported to have invented a boat that would go under water, but refused to give out the invention, because men were so wicked, they would be using it for sinking other boats ; yet he builds forts and digs trenches for Cæsar Borgia, and serves the tyrant of Milan. Dante sees the kingdoms of the world become “the kingdom of our God and His Christ” ; he calls upon angels to join men in singing hosannas to the kingdom’s near approach ; yet it is amidst orgies of treachery and sensuality inconceivable, amidst cruelties wanton beyond words, that the poet stalks upon his stern and solitary way. Angelo glimpses a purified world peopled with the free sons of God and brothers of Christ, and sings it all in the sonnets wherewith he immortally crowns Vittoria Colonna ; but he is at the same time Titanically wrathful about the oligarchs and

princes who compete in betraying Italy to marauding northern monarchs; and about perfidious Popes who intrigue to divide city against city, array Italians against Italians, in the interests of Papal authority. The primitive Christian purity of Giotto is expressed on plaster and canvas, and his Santa Maria Novella is progressing, his matchless campanile arising, while the Florentine families, issuing from their fortress houses, fill the streets with daily and nightly murder. The angels of Angelico were born amidst barbarities unmatched by oriental tyrants, and in an epoch wherein a Gonzaga puts captive hundreds to torture and death for a holiday show. The fires of Savonarola's soul, quenched by the fires that consumed his body, blaze forth amidst the impending ruin of Italy—and this partly at the hands of the detestable Charles VIII whom Savonarola himself had summoned from France as a saviour.

And so Italian history proceeds—the passion for unity, the vision of social perfection, always contesting the field with a militant and often wanton individualism. Indeed, her annals at times seem nothing else than a revelation of Italy's amazing capacity for producing contemporaneous saints and sinners—and saints and sinners unrivalled at that. And the paradox presents the sorest problem of the Italian past and present—a problem thus far insoluble, except momentarily, when great national peril or transcendent national purpose serves to organise and concentrate, for the time being, the disorderly public mind.

For the exaggerated individualism of the Italian is not synonymous with personal freedom. Or rather it is rooted in a freedom that is not freedom but waywardness—the waywardness of the child not yet taught or disciplined to think and act out of consideration for others. Hence in his perspective of whatever cause or problem is uppermost, in any given hour, his own personal idea or program occupies a place out of all proportion to the place he gives to the ideas and programs of others. And thus he begets within himself an habitual scepticism toward men and movements seeking ends other or higher than his own. Nor only scepticism: it also develops a mental attitude that is cynical and deadly both to himself and his nation.

So we come to the cardinal sin of the Italian—his too common inability to think trustfully, and therefore to act candidly and with constancy, in his relations to others, or as a social being. Where faith and self-sacrificing co-operation ought to exist, where such co-operation is indeed the sole salvation of a cause or of the nation, we find lamentable and fatal division. We find also individual intelligence over-reaching itself and becoming cleverness; and we find the cleverness exercising itself anarchically and futilely—a cleverness without conscience, without social sense or utility, and achieving only social destruction. Or again, as in the time of the Renaissance, we find one Italian community camped against another, and each community living in a continuous riot of conflicting individual geniuses within its own borders.

Perhaps there was no time, during that entire millennium of Nordic invasion, when invasion could not have been withstood by a united Italy. It was always through the gates of division—of the divisions of Italians among themselves—that the earlier barbaric tribes came ; and through the same gates came the later French and Spanish lords and mercenary armies. Indeed, the invasions were oftener than not invited : the Italian despot called in the invader against other Italian despots ; the Italian city called in the enemies of all Italy to ravage other Italian cities. Nor was it merely the despot, the city, the oligarch ; the Popes called in the foreigners, again and again ; Dante summoned Henry of Luxembourg as the anointed of God ; Savonarola hailed Charles VIII as the redeemer of Italy. And it was through the division of Italian against Italian that the Austrian tyranny so long endured. It was indeed the inability of the men of the Risorgimento to co-operate that enabled France to snatch Nice as the price of her help in the wars of liberation.

There has never been a moment when there was not enough intelligence in Italy, not enough idealism, to transform the land and its people into a phenomenally free and happy commonwealth ; a commonwealth, too, redemptive to the world. Yet individual intelligence has for ever schemed against individual intelligence ; individual idealists have exhausted themselves in conflicts with other idealists. And so the soul of Italy, ever youthful and ever radiant, and betimes almost rampant with high vision and

consecration thereto, has never been able to realise itself effectively, never been able to fulfil its divine appointment to unite humanity. And this division of Italian against Italian, of ideal against ideal, of intelligence against intelligence—this is not only the cardinal sin of Italy : it is the consequent cardinal curse, the curse which only Italians themselves can lift from themselves, from their national life.

Yet how often has the curse seemed just about to be lifted ! How often has this anarchic individualism been able, in great epochal moments, to transcend itself in miracles of co-operate devotion, heroism and victory ! The apostolic mutualism of the friends of Mazzini, the fidelity of the followers of Garibaldi, will live among the holiest memories of mankind. The few but resplendent days of Mazzini's Roman Republic will remain a proof of man's divine capacity for freedom—a capacity so rarely perceived or summoned forth by the official shepherds. That Republic will remain, also, as almost the chief approximate realisation of an ideal society. And the World-War furnishes no greater achievement, no sublimer or more hallowing spectacle, than the rally of Italy to the Piave, after the devastating disaster of Caporetto. Caporetto itself was due to division among Italians ; and the Piave was due to that marvellous response, to that almost miraculous unity, of the young men reacting against the disaster.

The Italian nation of that period was typified, was indeed glorified, in one of her young

noblemen, Fulcieri Paulucci di Calboli, who, wounded and mutilated, and dying by inches, was taken from city to city, addressing great audiences from the wheel-chair to which he was confined, appealing for the military and moral rehabilitation of his country. When still in the hospital, he would appeal to his wavering countrymen in words like these: "When the day of a divine revenge will come—and it will come—then the tombs will open and, as in the song of the Garibaldian epic, the dead will rise. They will come to meet us, and they will lend us their hands. . . . And when, in the hardest of the fights, the inevitable moment of discouragement and of weakness comes, they will cry out to us: *Avanti, avanti!* forward on the ground which our blood has consecrated to Italy! Forward, always forward, and farther still, until the three-coloured flag waves on the frontiers given by God to Italy. . . . Then shall we rest in peace!" He was called, also still in the hospital, to the presidency of the Section of Patriotic Defence in the Committee of Action. The work of this Section was to watch and combat all those who tried to discourage the people in Italy's darkest hour; those who secretly sabotaged the war, trying to neutralise the efforts and to paralyse the courage of the armies. Nor only was he untiring in his work: a spiritual tragedy was added to the physical. It became his solemn duty to his country to accuse, in the name of the "combattenti" or fighting men, the father of the friend who had once saved his life on

the battlefield. As his labours increased, he became transfigured, his soul invested with a mystic flame. Fulcieri Paulucci "personified in himself," says one of his comrades in arms, "the sublimity of that spontaneous chivalrous order of the mutilated which was among the noblest and most outstanding creations of Italy in war, and which was worth a whole army to Italy after Caporetto."

So always, notwithstanding the extreme individualism so characteristic of the Italian people, notwithstanding the almost wilful determination of each Italian to go his own way, when this individualism is withal seized by some patriotic passion, when some compelling and associating vision lays hold of it, then we find it exemplifying the highest order of renunciation for the sake of national or moral unity. This has been often manifested in the economic sphere. The glass workers of Italy long carried on a co-operative production and administration that equalled the devoted unity of Garibaldi's immortal Thousand. The Emilian and Romanogole co-operatives—which are models of administration—reveal a quality of economic and social mutualism far surpassing the old Rochdale or English co-operators. The Rochdale co-operatives are essentially commercial partnerships, along somewhat conventional lines, on the part of a great number of individuals for their mutual advantage, but carrying with it no social passion or purpose. But the Italian co-operative movements differ from the English in the fact that they are

fervently apostolic : they are regarded as modes of initiating the transformation of industrial and political society. And should once this kind of co-operative spirit seize the Italian peoples as a whole, moving them by a single purpose and toward a single end, then the nation might suddenly pass into a social order whose antecedancy could be found only in some of the earlier Christian communities.

Yet, even so, it would always be a co-operation leaving free play to the individual. The Italian must find freedom in association or association in freedom—or he will not associate. It was this that Mazzini so clearly discerned, and this that led to his antagonism toward every form of the socialist state, the hierarchical collectivism, predicated by the socialism of his day. Mazzini knew that an industrial and civil society founded upon the Marxian doctrine—issuing thus from the sheer war between classes which was the core of that doctrine—would be impossible of realisation in Italy. The Italian temperament would never endure the Marxian state—even if it could be experimentally initiated. So, also, would the Soviet system of Russia be impossible of realisation in Italy, as Lenin himself now well knows. Without discussing the necessity or non-necessity of the proletarian dictatorship, as applied to the Russian peoples ; even admitting that no other programme than that of the Bolshevist was or is yet possible of realisation in Russia—it yet remains true that the system would prove a tragic absurdity if attempted by or among the Italian peoples. The Italian socialists of the left seem unaware of

how little they themselves would submit to the Russian régime ; of how immediately unmanageable they would be in the first hour of a like dictatorship. Lenin, with all his genius for organisation and control, would not last overnight in Italy ; and the Italian communists would be the first to turn against him. Especially is this true, when we consider that the Russian proletarian dictatorship is but a candid fiction—that it is, in fact, but the administrative sovereignty of a few very able men in the *name* of the proletariat.

Whatever the difficulties and tragedies through which Italy must pass, in the order of her industrial solution and social reconstruction, whatever her final industrial and political society proves to be, it must eventually be, as I have already emphasized, a synthesis of both unity and liberty—a society in which unity completes itself in liberty, in which liberty finds and fulfils itself in unity. In fine, the only social solution tolerable to the Italian lies in such a sincere and inclusive application of the principle of democracy as has not hitherto been attempted, as has not even been considered, by the nations we conventionally call civilised.

The paradoxical character of the Italian people presents an especially portentous problem to-day. The Italian race now confronts its third commanding moment of choice and of destiny. The war and its evil issues, the betrayals and disillusionments of this people, have been in a sense uncreative of both industrial and political society. Governmental and economic systems have been thrust together into the melting-pot.

All the old Italian passions, good and evil alike, the old vices and virtues, the old scepticisms and ideals, are awake and astir. The forces of national reaction are at work, stimulated by the unbelievably brutish reactions of stronger nations ; while the extreme left, incited also from abroad, thinks to establish a communist commonwealth by violence. And into the midst of the conflicts and cross-purposes comes the Government—we may hope supported by the body of the people—seeking a solution and synthesis of productive capital and labour that shall be an approach to industrial democracy. As I shall elsewhere point out, no other government has essayed such an adventure ; no other national ministry has thus proposed an immediate social goal ; no other nation has been so significantly called upon to make up its mind. If now the Italian people deliberately enter upon this adventure, if the nation soon gird itself for the pursuit of this goal, then not only will the new order implicit in her Government's programme be achieved : beyond that, by virtue of the prodigious achievement, Italy may quickly pass into an unexampled international leadership, providing promise to a world now besotted with despair and bereft of hope. Moreover, by thus keeping her providential appointment, so pregnant with universal weal, may the ancient paradox of her national being, the ageless tragedy inhering in her national ongoing, be resolved in a democracy of onward action truly divine, a progress empowered with the purpose of the Christ.

III

THE REVOLUTION OF SEPTEMBER, 1920

ON September 2nd, 1920, and during the week following, the metal and engineering industry of Italy underwent a revolution potential with that country's international leadership along the only true path of social salvation. Except in the camp of Lenin on the extreme left, and in the camp of the financial internationalists on the extreme right, there is little or no apprehension of what this Italian revolution portends. Yet the question it has raised, the opportunity it has projected, constitute a judgment day for our civilisation.

The prelude to the uprising was the demand of the metal-workers, about the middle of August, for an increase of wages, the demand being based upon the highly increased cost of living. The employers refused the increase. For ten days thereafter, the workers practised a "white strike" in the metallurgical industries. By obeying literally the rules of the factory, and by other methods of obstruction, all within legal bounds, the output of the factories was so reduced as to exhaust the patience of the employers. On September 2nd, the National Federation of Employers declared a lock-out of

the men, and a closing down of the works. The order of the General Council asserted: "that the policy of obstruction has already degenerated into a condition of absolute anarchy within the factories," bringing "production almost to a complete standstill, entailing a useless consumption of coal and raw material," and creating "in the engineering and metal industry so grave a situation that the owners have only abstained from closing down the works because of their desire to prove themselves animated at all points by a conciliatory spirit." The Council therefore resolved that firms which were members of the Federation, and which were closing down their works, would be prepared to examine the demands of the workers' organisations "only in the event of the existing abnormal and illegal state of affairs ceasing." At the same time, the Italian Federation of Metal-workers, acting through a Trade Union Committee of Action, immediately countered the lock-out order of the owners with a "lock-in" order of the workers. According to its pronouncement of September 3rd, the Committee of Action had foreseen the intention of the owners, "and had already instructed its delegates to return to their constituencies and urge the workers to seize the factories at the first sign" of their shutting down. This prompt decision of the Committee "thus nullified the decision of the owners. The workers have everywhere prevented the interruption of work, in spite of the fact that the owners have everywhere tried to remove the technical staff by

threatening them with dismissal." It is, therefore, upon the owners the responsibility for all damage caused to production falls. "It is true," continues the pronouncement, that the owners, "while passing their resolution—a resolution which, professing to be only a simple lock-out, really means war to the knife—they at the same time pretend, as soon as an abnormal situation has ceased to exist, to be willing to discuss the workers' demands. But in order to force the owners to a concession such as this, it has been necessary to use obstruction and the workers have been obliged to occupy the factories! Let us hope that the workers' firmness in continuing their policy of struggle and self-sacrifice will end in inducing the owners to take further steps along the path towards a solution." The Committee furthermore declares that "the occupation of the factories in no way alters the orders issued before the period of obstruction. We therefore urge upon all workers the desirability of avoiding any useless waste of time in the factories. All should direct their efforts towards preventing the disorganisation of the works and towards making good the absence of the technical staff." And "all meetings and reunions should be held outside work-hours, i.e., during meal hours and at change of shifts."

The first lock-out had been on the part of the Romeo works at Milan, on August 30th, and on the 31st this was answered by the occupation by the workers of about two hundred and eighty metallurgical establishments in

Milan. Then came the promulgation of the order of the Council of Employers on September 2nd, followed by the order of the Metal-workers on September 3rd. Within forty-eight hours thereafter, and with extraordinary quiet and order, unanimity and discipline, the workers occupied the factories of all the large industrial centres of Italy.

But the workers were under no illusions as to their ability to carry on the works without technical skill and business administration. At first, such of the technical and administrative employees as refused to make common cause with the manual workers were allowed to depart in peace : this was thought advisable, and also thought to be good class-strategy, in view of the fact that considerable numbers of such employees remained of their own choice. But when it was found that these were not enough, and where such skill and administration was not voluntary, the technicians and engineers were compelled to proceed with their duties. They were not otherwise molested ; on the contrary, they were treated with great consideration and respect. In some instances, such as Bianchi's motor works, the whole staff remained, the factory running with clock-work precision, the output augmented by approximately thirty per cent. Buying and selling also continued in general as between factories. A general bureau of sale was created in Milan. Many clients refused to cancel their orders, but took the goods as they were delivered. The workers seized raw materials on the railways, and occupied coal-

mines and subsidiary industries essential to the operation of the metal-works.

Of highest significance is the harmony which prevailed among the workers, and the evident hopefulness and even happiness with which they obeyed the somewhat Draconic orders of their Committee of Action. *A discipline much severer than that which any of the employers had dared was established and exercised by the workers themselves by mutual consent.* Instant and drastic punishment was visited upon any one found slacking. They also established an eight-hour shift whereby work was continuous. The men were not allowed to leave the factories, but slept at night on cots provided by the respective local Committees of Action. The women were instructed to depart at night, in order to care for their families. The use of all intoxicating drinks was prohibited, and likewise the petty gambling so common in some Italian communities. All in all, it was a Puritan austerity that was prescribed and commonly practised; even enforced where rare necessity occurred. During rest-hours, lectures on economic subjects were given, and sometimes on subjects of literary or general intellectual interest. Even classical concerts were given, I am told, in a few instances. Ofttimes the rest-hour was occupied by the reading aloud of books by some one appointed. Nor was the instruction or reading based, as is the case in Russia, upon a strict materialistic doctrine of life and society. Questions of morals and religion were freely discussed, and most divergent views advanced.

In one instance, so I am told by an Italian scholar of high distinction—which instance he declared to be fairly typical—a body of young workers asked his participation in a conference upon the subject of the higher spiritual preparation of Italian workers for “the new society.” It was indeed of immense significance that the workers, while engaged in their revolution, thus manifested, at one point and another, an interest in things above and beyond the immediate struggle—manifested the presence in their midst of a quest for spiritual increase, for a clue to a social order including and harmonising the whole life of man.

It is true that the employees established their Red Guards in different factories, especially those of Milan, Turin and Genoa ; and, in some factories, they erected barbed wire defences. But these were never needed, as the military was nowhere and at no time either ordered or permitted to act, except at a preliminary struggle at Genoa. The employers appealed to the Government for intervention ; but the Government made it plain, from the outset, that force would not be used to eject the workers from the occupied works. The Government was both willing and urgent for arbitration ; but this the employers would not have, and thus they turned the tide of public feeling against them. It may safely be said that, during the month of September, the sympathy of the Italian population on the whole was with the workers.

Then came the further struggle, involving the Government and the Socialist Party with the

Confederation of Owners and the Confederation of Labour, and finally issuing in the virtual surrender of the owners to the Decree of the Government. On September 7th, there was a conference at Milan between the General Confederation of Labour and the Executive of the Socialist Party. This conference resulted in the decision of the Socialist Executive to support the action of the Federation. This decision was due in large part to the mutual leadership of Turati and d'Aragona in the Socialist Party. On September 8th, the Employers' Federation met and passed a resolution demanding the evacuation of the factories as an indispensable condition to any further negotiation with the workers. The employers contended that it was the workers and not themselves who had precipitated the crisis; "that the workers' organisations, after accepting discussion" on the basis of the difficult situation in which the metal and engineering trades had become involved, then "suddenly and brusquely put an end to it, perhaps realising the impossibility of refuting the facts and figures advanced by the owners." The employers further declared the occupation of the factories to be illegal and arbitrary, and to be not only directed against "liberty of the person, against the rights of property, against public law and order," but to constitute a series of "public crimes and a subversion of the constituted order of society." The employers also attacked the Government as having "under a pretence of neutrality, concealed its hesitation not merely to keep law

and order, but to maintain the position of the State as a superior body, representative of the national interest, armed both with the will and the capacity to guarantee the security of civil and of social life." On September 12th, a conference of workers in occupation of the factories was held at Milan, and a decision was reached to hand over to the General Federation of Labour the direction of the movement. The National Council of the General Federation agreed "that the logical cause of the failure to arrive at any solution of the struggle must be ascribed to the obstinacy of the employer. The Conference is of the opinion that the extension and importance of the movement do not tolerate or admit of any solution on the simple basis of wages ; and "that this historic moment sees the impossibility of the existing relations between employer and employed. . . . It resolves that the object of the struggle be the recognition by the employer of the principle of labour control of the factories, hereby proposing to open a branch towards those large conquests which must infallibly tend to collective control and to socialisation, with a view to an organic solution of the problem of production. Labour control will afford the working classes an opportunity for technical preparation ; it will allow them, if they unite to themselves the technical and intellectual classes, who will not be able to deny their assistance to this high task of civilisation"—the substitution of the authority of the workers for that of the employers in industry.

It should be clearly understood that the word "control," in this connection, has quite another meaning than that conveyed by the English usage of the world. The common ignorance of this difference of meaning has given rise to much irrelevant discussion in the Anglo-American press, and even among publicists who ought to know better. The control of the factories, according to the Latin use of that word, means much the same, though in a more intimate and comprehensive sense, as the expert's inspection of an English or American financial institution. The demand of the workers was this: the recognition and establishment of the right to examine all the accounts and operations, both financial and technical, of the industry in which they were engaged. This control included the discussion and mutual decision, between themselves and the employers, of the rate of wages—the wages to be based upon the actual condition of the industry. It also involved the participation of the workers in the improvement of machinery, conditions of labour, and hygiene and mechanical safety.

In mid-September, Giolitti, acting as President of the Council of Government, intervened with what was substantially an ultimatum to the employers to accept the principle of the workers' control. The employers therefore gave way on September 17th, though deploring the "continued demonstration by the Government of its failure to grasp the fact that the occupation of the factories and the violations of personal freedom and liberty committed by the workers

have transferred the struggle from the economic sphere to a political and constitutional basis." They also declared that, though accepting the Government's ultimatum, they had no intention of resuming negotiations until they had obtained the evacuation of the factories, and had thereby procured "recognition of the principle that such methods of struggle are incompatible with any civilised order of society" and for the prevention of "the complete discredit and dissolution of the country." Nevertheless, the employers agreed it to be "necessary that the existing state of antagonism between the employer and employed classes should cease, so that the harmonious co-operation of the employers themselves with their technical and administrative staff on the one hand, and with the manual workers on the other, may give rise to an intensified, secure, and disciplined progress in production." Hence, notwithstanding all their objections to the action of the Government, "being now face to face with the Government's announced intention to issue a Decree concerning the control of industry, they invite the Premier to make their own co-operation on an equally representative committee, mentioned in the Decree, absolutely dependent on the contingent evacuation of the factories."

A Council of Employers and a Council of Workers, meeting immediately in Rome under the chairmanship of Giolitti, reached an agreement regarding the wage dispute wherein the lock-out and the resulting occupation of the factories had originated. But the agreement

contained a clause to the effect that the employers' representatives wished it noted that they could not, "by reason of the explicit instructions conferred upon them, accept the proposal of the President of the Council with regard to the conditions for the re-admission to work of the workers, and hereby declare that submission to these proposals is only made as to an act of authority, the responsibility for which they leave to the Government." Notwithstanding the reluctance of the employers' representatives, however, the meeting was immediately followed by the issue of a Royal Decree, appointing a Commission to prepare a programme for the introduction of industrial control by the workers. And the Decree was at once supported by the General Federation of Labour, in a public pronouncement giving an account of the workers' effective action, and also by the Prime Minister in a speech to Parliament, on September 27th, defending the position which the Government had taken.

Of extraordinary significance was the speech of the Prime Minister. "We are face to face," he said, "with a real change in the social order; it is useless to deny it. Every politician and statesman ought to realize this truth. The advent of the Fourth Estate began to be apparent towards the close of last century, and the attempts then made to arrest its course had evil consequences; these movements are dangerous to regulate and cannot be arrested. . . . The outbreak of the war had certain economic, social, and financial results. The

trenches were the most opportune fields for propaganda, and all the parties made impossible promises. But those who heard them looked on these promises as rights. Moreover, the habit of serious and orderly work disappeared, and not in Italy alone." Besides, "during the period of the war certain special industries arose which were dependent on a single buyer, the State; and the employer consented to grant increases of wages on condition of being allowed to compensate himself by raising his own prices to the buyer. Another consequence arising out of the war was the unpleasant spectacle of an ill-gotten wealth impudently displayed. The country believed that with the end of the war all these results would themselves come to an end. This was a delusion." "I advised the employers," he continues, "against proclaiming the lock-out, and told them that they must not count on the support of the public authorities; no promises, therefore, have been broken by the Government. It has been argued that the Government ought to have prevented the occupation of the factories, or ought to have caused them to be evacuated when occupied. In order to have prevented the occupation it would have been necessary to place a garrison in each of the 600 factories (supposing such garrisons could have arrived in time, with lightning speed), and thus to have used up the whole forces at the Government's disposal, leaving none to deal with the workers outside the factories, and totally neglecting the security of the public. I should have been shutting up the

public armed forces in the factories, exposing them to the danger of a siege ; or, in order to obtain the evacuation of the factories, a struggle involving grave consequences would have had to take place, while all the time the Labour Federation had guaranteed the movement to be an economic and not a political one." "But," he concludes, "in dealing with so vast a movement, it is not possible to apply ordinary standards. The act of the worker in occupying a works from which the owner wishes to have him ejected is an act of disobedience ; to employ force against him is to punish him with the death penalty. On the contrary, I felt myself called upon to intervene in the relations between employer and employed, and, as the Senate is aware, an agreement has been reached." Reading then the text of the Decree, Giolitti frankly explained that it aimed at changing the structure of industry. "When the worker is acquainted with these conditions," the Prime Minister concluded, "he will be able to calculate the directions in which he may make a successful demand. Moreover, the Decree prejudices nothing. The joint Commission is to formulate proposals which will serve as the basis for a Bill aiming at the organisation of industry on the principle of the workers' intervention in technical, financial, and working administration. The same Commission is to propose principles of factory regulation and of the engagement and dismissal of employees. *In this way the worker will take his place as an associate, and not as an enemy, of the employer.*"

So ends the first stage of the Revolution: it is accepted and consecrated by the Government: and it ends, I am convinced, according to the desire and the plan of the Prime Minister. I am of the opinion that the Council of the Confederation of Labour was mistaken in its conclusion and statement that the workers forced the surrender of the Government. Signor Giolitti could well afford to let the workers' representatives think so—to let their pronouncements have free play. And one must not be too sure, of course, of what is in the back of another man's head. But I am pretty certain that the result, far from being a surrender on the part of the Prime Minister, was rather his complete victory—was indeed the culminating triumph of this extraordinary politician's life. It was not merely Giolitti who was playing the workers' game: the workers were playing Giolitti's game from the first. Only it so happened that Giolitti and the workers were pursuing an identical goal; and this notwithstanding the ignorance and distrust of Giolitti on the part of both workers and employers.

The political press of the great industrial nations, particularly of France and the United States, has been clamorous in its denunciation of the manner in which the Italian Government met the crisis. They have cried aloud against the acquiescence of Giolitti in the occupation of the great industrial works. It was incredible that such a thing could be—that the Government should not only refuse to expel the workers but should even look benevolently upon an

action which, for the time 'being, dispossessed the owners of their factories. But they might have understood—perhaps they did understand!—that Giolitti was minded to teach the capitalist a lesson. He wished the owners to discern the advancing doom of industrial monarchism. He hoped the crisis might teach them that their only safety, even of a temporary sort, lay in the direction of industrial democracy. And he intended them to glimpse what he himself fully foresees—that along this path of industrial democratisation lies the only possible preservation of civilisation.

Nor did Giolitti for a moment intend to plunge Italy into civil war for the sake of the men who had made unclean and fabulous fortunes out of the war with the Central Empires. It is probable that there is no extreme socialist to whom the war-profitier is more 'hateful than to the Italian Prime Minister. He has done his best to make such profiteers disgorge their profits to the public treasury—I am not sure but he would gladly have their heads if he could. In any case, he had no intention of ordering, on the profiteers' behalf, a conflict between Italian soldiers and Italian workmen—a conflict that probably would have precipitated social war throughout the length and breadth of the peninsula. Furthermore, he was well aware of a fact to which the industrials themselves seemed blind—that to have evacuated the workers from the works by military force would have been but a prelude to an economic disintegration from which Italy would not soon

have recovered. Signor Giolitti is, besides, in principle averse to military intervention in industrial crises ; he knows the fatuousness of attempting military solutions of economic problems.

Giolitti wished also the workers to learn a conclusive lesson through their sudden contact with the economic facts of industry. He wished them to see the impracticability of administering the machinery of production and distribution with their present training and capacity, and in the midst of an international production and distribution capitalistically owned and operated. The workers demonstrated, however, that they were not in the least deluded about the great matter. Mr. Hiram K. Moderwell, an accomplished and profound American observer of the revolution, says of the metal-workers : " They did not fancy that they could run the factories without direction and discipline. On the contrary, so highly did they prize direction that they arrested their directors and threatened them with dire penalties if they did not go on directing."

Yet there is not the slightest reason for doubting, there is every reason for trusting, the sincerity of Giolitti's sympathy with the workers. There is also every reason for trusting his discernment and intelligence concerning the present human hour. He is aware, even if the capitalist owner is not aware, that the old order of production and distribution is doomed. He is, furthermore, sufficiently sure in his own mind that it ought to be doomed. Finally, he is

entirely honest in his determination that it shall be doomed. His intention predicates a human order which shall eliminate all socially useless men or institutions. Not Lenin himself is more intent upon wresting production from the profiteer, upon ridding industry and society of parasitic persons and performances, than the Prime Minister of Italy. But he wishes to initiate the inevitable change, he wishes his Italy to enter upon this great adventure which has the new order for its goal, through processes wasting as little as possible of life and labour and wealth ; processes that shall also, as they run their creative course, gain as much as possible of common consent and goodwill.

The worst of all delusions is that of social solution through war between the proletaire and the proprietor, the workers and the owners. If the world-problem narrows down to such a conflict, the result can only be the end of existing society in a new series of dark ages, with probably the death of a large part of the earth's population and the return of what is left to the jungle. It was thus a wisdom weighted with the world's destiny that enabled Giolitti to prevent the transformation of his Italy into an arena of the class-war, and that also invested him with the righteous shrewdness whereby he brought both the owners and the workers, both his government and its principal socialist opponents, to a mutual commitment to his programme of social conciliation.

The divers governments are still so occupied with the pursuit of their respective recoupments

of the cost of the war, that the peoples have not even glimpsed the prodigious portent of the step taken by the Italian Premier. It is indeed an amazing spectacle—that of this aged and adroitest politician of Europe alone discerning the signs of his times, and, as if acting under the impulsion of some high vision, deliberately committing his government to a programme purposing an entire reconstruction of industrial society, and a re-orientation of the functions of the State. Thus, for the first time, a modern government initiates, of its own foresight and volition, an actual and comprehensive revolution. A revolution, it is true, to be wrought out through enlightening experiment and enlightened purpose: but no less, therefore, rather thereby all the more, a radical change of the structure of society. As I elsewhere point out, no other national government has proposed such an adventure in social creation to its people. And it is a national adventure which, if carried through to its proposed issue, will logically place Italy in the forefront of social mankind, even enabling her, mayhap, to summon the nations to a common good over-paying the infinite woe and waste of the World-War.

IV

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

THE political realist—if he be really real—is inevitably a practical idealist, seeking so to conjoin the real and the ideal as to avoid breaks and chasms in progress. He not only discerns the highest desires of his times : he at least reckons, if he does not always steer, his course by them. He does not wait to be driven by events : he envisions their approach, and goes forth to meet them. The idealized to-morrow he leads captive, impressing it into the redemptive service of to-day. He substantivizes, so far as he may, to-day's human fact with the nobler to-morrow of his perception or faith. Thus he proceeds always upon the knowledge—so fundamental to the true political practitioner—that there is no such thing as a static social condition. Society is always fluid, and the elements thereof are always revising the proportions in which they stand to one another. The predominant fact or force of one day may be the subordinate of another. Social equilibrium lies in keeping the balance between the conditions of the present and the desired or portended conditions of the future. The wisdom

of the State—if one may still be so bold as to presume the existence of such a wisdom—consists in the daily discovery and concretion of this balance. National health and stability are thus identical with perpetual change, with unresting onward movement ; and resistance to change, the refusal of a people to move on, is significant of national senility and decay.

Doubtless Giovanni Giolitti has not exactly said this sort of thing to himself. It is no less in the spirit of an idealistic realism that he, pre-eminently a political practitioner, has projected the great adventure which now interrogatively horizons his country, awaiting its yea or nay. Fantastic as his programme seems to the Lords of Big Business, it yet rises out of a discernment rare in the records of politicians, partaking of a shrewdness worthy of that shrewdest of all Italians—the Saint of Assisi. Signor Giolitti knows—as the ministers of no other state, save one, know—that the sheer profit-making mode of production and distribution is nearing its end ; that it must either deliberately pass into a more social mode, or else violently disappear, with a long period of industrial death and social chaos ensuing. *It is either a wilderness and a guerrilla world, or a world socialized in freedom, that mankind will soon be entering—this Giolitti sees, and that whether his sight be clear or dim.*

Nor is it suddenly or recently that he has become aware of the approaching crisis of human society. He has been foreseeing it for a score or more of years ; and for a score or

more of years he has broodingly, silently, sought some solution other than the red result of the class-war now universally preparing. Supremely shiftily as his political course has been, he is withal endowed with a social purpose that is as phenomenal as it is redemptive. Believing in his heart in both the justice and the inevitability of social rather than private production—of production for the use of all rather than for the profit of the few—and reaching his conclusions, not through the books of the economists, but through contact with the human fact—he has conceived the initial industrial solution which constitutes, at least up to the time of this writing, the programme of the Italian Government.

It is charged by the extreme socialist press that Giolitti's motive is the salvation of the capitalist society. It seems to me that the programme in itself is a sufficient answer to the charge. For the programme leads precisely to an opposite result—to the eventual elimination of capitalist control. But an elimination reached through the preparation of the workers: for Giolitti knows well—and it is upon this knowledge that he acts—and it is a knowledge which the whole World-War and its respective national crises clearly teach—that the workers are not prepared, are indeed far from competent, to take over the immediate operation and administration of industry. Even admitting—as indeed we must admit if we are truthful—that the workers' lack is the result of the centuried spoliation of themselves, of the centuried

appropriation of their labour-product, by the entrenched and empowered owners, it still remains true that the workers are as yet incapable of organising and administering a new economy of life and labour. It remains true, also, that every attempt at violent and instant change—a change impinging upon war between social classes—can result only in a new series of dark ages, if not a return of mankind to the jungle.

Giolitti's programme is not different from that of the true socialist: but he seeks its fulfilment through the progressive but complete technical and spiritual preparation of the workers. In speaking to Mr. Edward Mowrer, an unusually able and lettered American journalist living in Rome, the Premier said: "We count on Trade Union supervision to lead to the reconciliation of the classes. Hitherto the workers have always received the same salaries regardless of the condition of industry. Henceforth they will know the exact condition of industry, and will base their demands accordingly, having a direct interest that industries pay. I expect to see all production greatly increased. . . . Certainly, the industrial education of the workers will permit them to hasten the day when they are capable of administering industry by themselves, but that is a long process. Supervision will also force industrial owners to pay more attention to production, and less to stock exchange operations. This should increase production and tend to prevent over-great industrial concentration."

It is a sort of industrial monism that Signor Giolitti predicates—a monism dissolvent of the industrial and social dualism, destructive and diabolic, which arraigns and arms workers and owners over against each other in hateful camps of deathful purpose. And he perceives, or seems to perceive, in this monism of his, the possibility of a provisionally wedded capital and labour, the happy issue whereof would be an eventual society in which all would be at once owners and workers. It was some such hope as this that constituted, so far as Giolitti was concerned, the heart of the Government Decree of September 19th.

According to this Decree, a Commission was constituted, consisting of six members named by the General Federation of Employers and six named by the General Federation of Labour. The Commission was instructed to formulate proposals which should serve as a basis for a Government Bill embodying the principle of the workers' participation in industrial decision and administration. The representatives of the employers set about its task of formulating propositions; the representatives of the workers did the same. But neither workers nor employers were able to construct a programme upon which they could or would mutually agree. It was then that Giolitti practically sent both Commissions about their business, and decided to formulate his own programme for presentation to Parliament.

The Bill or Project of Law thus presented by the Prime Minister, who was also Minister of

the Interior, in consort with Signor Alessio, Minister of Industry and Commerce, and Signor Labriola, Minister of Labour and Social Providence, consisted of twelve articles providing for the "control of the industries by the workers of these same industries." Only the barest skeleton of these articles can be given within the brief space of this chapter. But, dry as they are, these bare outlines should be well considered by the reader—who should also keep in mind the explanation I have given, in the preceding chapter, of the usage and significance, on the part of both the Government and the workers, of the word "control."

The first Article related to (*a*) making the workers acquainted with the conditions of the industries wherein they are employed ; (*b*) improving the technical instruction as well as the moral and economical conditions of the workers ; (*c*) insuring the execution of the laws made for the protection of the workers ; (*d*) advising improvements in the methods of production with a view to increasing production and economising its costs ; (*e*) rendering the relations between employers and workers increasingly normal and peaceful.

Article II arranges for the separate control of each industry or category of industry, chiefly the following industries : (*a*) iron and metal and mechanical works ; (*b*) textile works and clothing manufactories ; (*c*) chemical industries and those relating to sugar, soap, dyes and so forth ; (*d*) production of articles of food ; (*e*) tanneries and leather manufactories ;

(*f*) electrical industries ; (*g*) building construction, woodworks, glass, pottery and related industries ; (*h*) land transportation ; (*i*) navigation and the loading and unloading of cargoes ; (*j*) paper mills and printing industries ; (*k*) mines and quarries. Excluded from this control are industries carried on by the State or by municipalities, and new industries employing less than sixty men.

Article III provides for the election on the part of each category of industry, by a system of proportional representation, of a Commission of Control composed of nine members, six elected by the workmen and three elected by the engineers and technical heads of the industries.

Article IV provides that the Commission elected according to Article III shall choose a delegate for each industrial establishment, which delegate shall exercise the control and report to the Commission. The delegate must be chosen from the workmen of age who belong to the establishment to be controlled, and from the workmen who have had at least three years of service. The regulations which must be established according to Article IX will determine the manner in which the delegates will exercise their function, taking into account the special conditions of each category of industry. The Commission must be renewed every three years, and the delegates may be re-elected.

Article V provides that the delegates of the Commission of Control shall have the right to

the means of knowing in each industry (a) the cost of the raw materials ; (b) the cost price of production ; (c) the administrative methods ; (d) the methods of production ; (e) the salaries of workmen ; (f) the constitution of the capital ; (g) the returns of the works ; (h) the way in which laws protecting the workmen and the laws concerning the recruiting and discharging of workmen are executed. The data collected by the delegates cannot be communicated to persons outside the Commission of Control.

Article VI provides that at the meetings of the Commission of Control the industrials or employers may be represented by two delegates. A representative of the Superior Council of Labour may also participate in the meetings. The representatives of the employers and of the Council of Labour may make observations and present demands that shall be inscribed word for word ; but they have no right to vote. They have, however, the right to forbid the communicating of news that might prejudice the interests of industry or the interests of the Superior Council of Labour.

Article VII provides that the industrials or employers in each of the categories shall also nominate, according to regulations to be fixed, representatives to negotiate with the Commission of Control whenever it becomes necessary to impose upon particular industrials or employers obligations growing out of the present law. The representatives of the industrials, like the Commissions of Control, will be composed of nine members, and will be renewed every three years.

Also at the meetings of the delegates of the industrials and employers two delegates of the Commission of Control—that is the delegates of the workers—can participate and present their observations, but also without the right to vote.

Article VIII provides that, whenever special circumstances make it advisable, and in any case once a year, the representatives of industrials and the delegates of the Commission of Control shall meet under the presidency of a member of the Superior Council of Labour, in order to examine together the improvements in machinery, or labour or production which the experience of previous months makes advisable, and for settling controversies that may have arisen during the exercise of the control.

Article IX provides that, after hearing the opinion of the representatives of the industrials, then of the representatives of the Commission of Control, and of the Superior Council of Labour, new regulations may be instituted for the discipline of the workers and the employers, always taking account of the special conditions obtaining in each industry. These regulations must, however, be in conformity with the principles exposed in Articles X and XI.

Article X provides for the establishment of offices arranged for the reunions of representatives of the industrials and employers and of the Commissions of Control. These offices will also serve in some sense as labour exchanges, registering the men seeking work and regulating the order of preference by which each shall be employed. In the placing of the workers the

political or syndical affiliations of the worker must never be taken into account. Every industrial firm, however, can refuse to employ men who have been condemned for crime or who have been sent away from employment for disciplinary reasons. Disputes between employers or industrials and the Commission of Control, concerning any work or workers, shall be decided by two arbitrators, chosen one from the workers, one from the employers, acting under the presidency of a third person chosen by these, or, in case the two are not able to agree, chosen by the President of the Tribunal. And as no one can be refused employment for political or syndical reasons, so also no one can be dismissed for such reasons.

Article XI provides that, whenever the conditions of an industry render the reduction of the number of workers necessary, then, before proceeding with dismissals, the industry must, if the nature of the work permits, reduce the normal working hours to a minimum of thirty-six hours a week, with a corresponding reduction in wages ; and, if this is not sufficient, the employer must, if possible, arrange for such shifts among the workmen as will make their retention possible. But when dismissal becomes a necessity, the older workmen and those having families should be kept. If controversies between employers and workers arise concerning the dismissals, then the questions at issue shall be decided by arbitrators nominated and acting in the same way as provided in the preceding article.

Article XII provides that when special conditions in an industry demand it, and especially when there is great difference between the methods or conditions of an industry in different parts of Italy, then the regulations foreseen in Article III can decide that for one and the same industry there can be more than one Commission of Control, and in such case the number of the representatives of the industrials must be correspondingly increased. Article XII also provides that the expenses of the Commissions of Control are to be borne half by the industrials or employers and half by the workers, and that the apportionment of contributions and methods of collection shall be determined by the special regulations of Article III; and finally provides that the same regulations shall determine the sanctions necessary for assuring the observance of the present law of control.

The Bill was not passed upon by Parliament at the time it was presented. The question of bread, as well as questions of foreign policy, occupied much of the winter sessions. Besides, at no time was the Government assured, as regards this particular measure, of a satisfactory majority. The Socialist Party, which was the strongest and best organised in Italy before the occupation of the factories, and which has a large representation in Parliament, would have supported the Bill if the councils of Turati and d'Aragona had prevailed. Turati—a man of highest cultivation and possessing the potencies of great statesmanship, obtained the pledges of

a majority of Socialist deputies to join him in supporting the Government. But the violent left, led by Bombacci, was able to control the National Executive Party, which thus instructed the Socialist deputies against the proposed Project of Control, on the ground that it originated outside the Socialist Party and would help to perpetuate the life of capitalism. The (Catholic) Partito Popolare wavered, and, in the critical hour, proved itself to be practically without settled policy. The Conservative Parties, or fractions of parties, naturally opposed the measure. But, notwithstanding his lack of support on the part of any dependable Parliamentary coalition, it seems probable that Giolitti could have passed his Bill, had he forced the issue. But, hoping for a favourable majority really representative of the nation, he decided for dissolution and a new election. Whence the chief issue of the election, despite all divergent claims upon the voter's attention, is the question of whether or no the nation shall enter upon the industrial adventure. The probabilities, at the time of this writing, are upon the side of Giolitti's obtaining a majority in support of his programme. And upon this election—upon the decision which it renders—the future of Italy, if not the immediate future of civilisation, may well depend.

Yet whatever the issue of the election, no long return to a sheer capitalist society is possible in Italy. The challenge of the revolution of September, 1920, is final. Either the Bill of Signor Giolitti, premising the evolution of an industrial democracy, will be substantially

accepted, or another futile move of labour towards Bolshevism, countered by a harsh reaction toward sheer capitalism, will precipitate a social war akin to the wars of the Guelfs and the Ghibellines.

But even if Giolitti triumph, and the Government Project be thus accepted, against its effectuation two extremes will strive relentlessly. The first consists of that wing of the Socialist Party which takes orders from Moscow, and of the Anarchist Party acting under the inspiration of the capable Malatesta. Both Bolshevists and Anarchists believe the destruction of the existing society to be absolutely essential to the new society's appearing. These two extremes, antithetical as they are in both philosophy and purpose, are yet alike led by doctrinaires who have erected class-hatred into a religion; who have converted the theory of the class-war into an orthodoxy; and who teach that every effort towards human betterment, every social solution proposed within or by the existing society, is but a capitalist trap—a scheme whereby the workers are tricked into continuing their ancient servitude and despoilment. This dual Italian left is still a fighting force in Italy. And this notwithstanding its recent defeats in the streets of Florence and elsewhere; and notwithstanding, also, the socialist schism at the Congress of Leghorn.

Nor will the support of the Italian left come only or chiefly from Moscow. Sadly enough—and a fact not so paradoxical as would seem—the revolutionaries who fight Giolitti's project will be secretly aided by financial internation-

alists and their agents provocateurs. Nor only by the financiers: in conflicts wherein Italian blood has been shed, the money of at least one great Power, ostensibly allied with Italy, has been found upon the persons of men proclaiming themselves Bolshevists. It is too frequently these—the pseudo-apostles of a foreign Bolshevism—the disguised agents of a foreign capitalism—that Italian workmen follow, blindly fighting thus for a reaction ultimately conditioning them in both economic and political impotence.

The other extreme opposition to the effectuation of the Government Bill will come directly from industrials and financiers. The financialism of all nations, now as fearful and fanatical as it is watchful and conservative, will resort to every device, both foul and fair, tending to thwart the great adventure. For a successful initiation of industrial democracy in Italy becomes an incentive and an example to the peoples international, everywhere endangering the thrones of the financiers, whether they be in America, England, France or far Japan. Indeed, if you could get at the back of the sovereign financier's head, you would find therein a dread of the success of the Italian adventure twofold greater than his dread of Moscow. He still believes in the power of his governments to confine the Soviet experiment to Russia, and there to transform if not to end it. But if an industrial democracy be undertaken by a people as potent and alive as the Italians of to-day are; if this initiative be organised and urged by a so-called capitalist government; if it be

prepared by so able a political practitioner as Giolitti ; and if he have behind him the support of a Ministry of such as Sforza and Bonomi, Croce and Labriola ; then international financialism stands challenged by an authority not easily withstood. It will consequently feel that, at all costs, it must bring the Italian adventure to naught, even if the social structure of the nation be brought down in the process.

The left and the right are alike wrong. In either capital or labour, it is now only the creative spirit, only the constructive mind, that can save a society already in a state of dissolution, or bring forth therefrom a society responsible for the soul of man. And it is upon the turning back or transformation of the forces of destruction, it is upon the mobilisation of the nation in a united effort to effect a nobler human order, that the best minds of Italy have now centred their attention. It is to give these minds a task calling for their last consecration, a task exhausting their last resource, that their Prime Minister has set before them so great an adventure in industrial solution and social conciliation. It is indeed in answer to the divinest desire to-day surgent in the heart of the world, as well as in answer to the peril portending the world's end, that this extraordinary politician has propounded his programme for a new mode of economic production and administration—a programme envisioning an industry experimentally involving, by its own freely acting forces, a spiritual culture finally creative of economic justice and a complete society.

V

ALSO THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

OF the converging movements making for a new Italian society, the most fundamental is that of the revolution in the ownership and cultivation of the land. Because of the startling nature of the industrial revolt, because of the orderly occupation and successful operation of the metallurgical works by the workers, and because of the effect of this astounding achievement upon a civilisation largely centred in industrial production, the Italian agrarian revolt has had comparatively little attention. Indeed, the world is quite unaware of what has happened with regard to the land in Italy. Yet because of the fact that Italy is an agricultural country, her people chiefly dependent upon the cultivation of the soil, the revolt of the agricultural workers is even more significant than the revolt begun by the workers in the factories. Indeed, without the basic revolution in the use and ownership of the land, the industrial revolution could not hope for ultimate success. For industry depends, in the last analysis, upon the tenure and treatment of the land. More-

over, the agrarian revolt has nearly passed beyond the problematical stage: it has proceeded so far, and with such urgent if tacit approval on the part of the Government, that there is no probability of reaction. There is now hardly a question but that henceforth the cultivatable land in Italy will pass into the hands of the actual users.

The revolt has had many phases. The Italian peninsula, stretching from the Alps almost to North Africa, comprehends many varieties of climate and of soil; also several varieties of Italian character and development. In no two regions, therefore, has the revolt had exactly the same manifestations and aims. In each locality, it has accorded with the conditions peculiar thereto—with the aptitudes of the peasants, with the nature and products of the soil, with the methods of tillage and the system of tenure.

The best exposition of the agrarian problem of Italy is in a very remarkable monograph by Professor Adolfo Bellucci, bearing the title, "*Come si risolve la Questione Agraria in Romagna.*" But, as regards the revolution, especially in Southern Italy, the clearest summary has been made by Signor Giuseppe Prezzolini, a noble Italian publicist of international authority, in articles contributed to *The Nation* (of New York) and other American journals. Prezzolini declares "the seizure of the land by the peasants in Italy to be far more important than the seizure of the factories by the workers," because of the fact that, while industry is

relatively recent, "everything which concerns agriculture touches the most sensitive chords of Italian social and economic life." In Sicily, where the revolt has been most conclusive, Prezzolini points out that "one-sixth of the island is owned by 173 persons in a population of four millions ; one-third is owned by 787 persons." The agricultural workers, numbering 725,000, possess practically nothing. The great landowners live away from their lands, in Palermo, in Rome, on the French Riviera, and in Paris. They rent their lands to a class of publicans called *Gabellotti*. The *Gabellotto* advances money to the peasant for the year's crops ; or frequently he re-rents to others, who in their turn sublet, so that the peasant has to pay three or four middlemen. "The *Gabellotto* is the financier of the agrarian management of the proprietor ; he is usually a peasant who has grown rich, a usurer without scruples, who tries to get what profit he can from the land without improving it, not being sure of having it again, and also running the risk of losing the harvest by the frequent droughts. He employs a personnel of tyrants (rural guards, superintendents, etc.) to keep the peasant under strict guard for fear he should eat the seed instead of sowing it, or rob the harvest, or go to work on other lands. The *Gabellotto* pays the master and the peasant in advance, but he cannot rob the master and he can rob the peasant, and out of the advance payment which he gives to the peasant, he takes from thirty to fifty per cent. as interest. It is not to be wondered that the *Gabellotto* is

the most despised and hated person in Sicily." It was against the *Gabellotti* the revolt of the peasants was originally directed. The occupation of the land came as an expansion of the revolt. Prezzolini cites, as a typical instance, the case of the Duke of Bivona, a Spanish grandee, who came to sell his Italian estate to his *Gabellotto*. At Rome, envoys of the Catholic co-operatives and unions of ex-soldiers offered him three million lire for a part of his estate. He refused to accept because he hoped for better terms from his *Gabellotto*. But during the night, the Catholics and ex-soldiers attacked his fortress with stones, and forced the Duke to give up the land they wanted—100,000 hectares thus becoming the property of the peasants. This was the only act of violence during a revolt which resulted in the occupation of the land of an entire third of Sicily.

But the seizures as a rule have taken on not only a peaceful but a religious character. Prezzolini reports that "Crusades of peasants from the crowded cities would leave for tenures six or eight miles away, walking in fours, preceded by their leaders and flags, sometimes red, sometimes black, sometimes tri-coloured, and sometimes all three kinds. On foot and on mules, the population would take possession of the land, planting their banners and stationing their guards. They would go back to the land accompanied perhaps by gendarmes—who prevented disorder but had not been able to stop the invasion—and from there they would telegraph the King or the Prefect, announcing

their taking of possession, and asking for the authorisation even to defend the land against the owners by means of the gendarmes. There is often an agreement between two neighbourhoods, between two associations. Only once did a conflict break out between two neighbourhoods which had built trenches on disputed territory."

The revolt in Southern Italy is a direct issue of the war. The Italian peasant, unlike the workers of England, quite naïvely took the Government at its word—much as the little child takes the word of its mother. The Government had promised to provide for the peasants, who constituted the major part of the armies. To provide for the peasant meant to give land—there was no other way of providing for him. Nor does he seem ever to have questioned the will and the power of the Government to keep its promise. So, on being demobilised, and acting according to his interpretation of the Government's good pleasure, he simply took the land of the feudal owners, moved on to it and went to work. And it so happened that the Government *was* pleased—and made no pretence of being displeased—at having its hand thus forced by these childlike citizens. Nor was the Church less pleased than the Government. Indeed, the Catholics were the very first, writes Prezzolini, to incite the peasant to take the lands ; and, in many instances, the invasions were led by priests or monks. In one case, a Dominican friar led the struggle against the *Gabellotti* and the proprietors. Moreover, the revolt had, particularly in Southern Italy, no

political character or purpose ; it was absolutely economic, with a tinge of early Christian idealism.

But in Central and Northern Italy, the agrarian movement is older, and its manifestations are not the same as those depicted by Prezzolini in his account of Southern Italy. An exception must be made, however, in the instance of the Campagna, where many thousands of hectares have been occupied in the course of the recent revolt. Most of this land, some of it close under the walls of Rome, has been taken over by unions of ex-soldiers, who are not only happily cultivating it, but are also scientifically restoring the long exhausted soil. Near Rome, too, 40,000 hectares belonging to the Duke of Bivona, whose Sicilian estate I have already spoken of, were seized by the same unions, and with governmental approval. But in Lombardy, especially in regions comprehended by the great rice plantations, also in like regions on the Venetian mainland, and more especially in Romagna, the present agrarian movement began, roughly speaking, five to ten years before the War. Years before the revolt, co-operative agriculture had been carried on in the North—particularly in those provinces where the *contadini* had come under the influence of the Socialist Party. And it is due to the Socialist propaganda that the agrarian movements of Northern and Central Italy have generally taken on a political character, and that they have often adopted the communist programme.

In the more recent movement, the attitude of the Government, especially in the agrarian revolt of the South, is clear enough ; and as wise as it is clear. The Government has not hindered the revolt, has perhaps covertly guided it, with a view to securing in the peasantry a permanent stabilising social force. It is pretty certain, too, that on the ground of sheer social justice Signor Giolitti desired to give the land to its users, and to rid Italy of the socially useless or parasitic class that has for ages fattened on the peasantry, thereby impoverishing the nation and balking its normal development. However shifty a politician he may be, he is at bottom a thoroughly sincere and even ardent social reformer.

Equally clear and commendable is the attitude of the Church. For several reasons of its own, and especially as an antidote to extreme socialist doctrine, the Church as well as the Government desires the stabilising social force inherent in peasant ownership. True, the sincerity of the Church's action has been denied by both Conservatives and Socialists. But I am certain there is no reason for such denial—no reason for doubting that the Church, both in principle as well as a matter of policy, actually wished the land rendered back to the peasantry. Despite what is evil in Roman ecclesiastical history, it yet remains true that the Catholic Church is profoundly democratic at the core—at least in its genesis—and has historically taken the part, whenever put to the test, of men against masters. The Church also builds upon

a broad communistic base. Moreover, despite the splendours of the Cardinals and the Church processions, nowhere can be found more true shepherds of the people, more really Christlike persons, walking in the dignity of simple goodness, than among the village and rural priests of Italy. And it is not to be questioned, I am convinced, that the priests and friars who led the agrarian revolt in Sicily—and led it with the approval of the Church—were inspired by a genuine and passionate sympathy for the peasants, and even by something like an early Christian apostleship.

But granting that Church and State together secure in the peasantry the stabilising social force they each desire; granting that peasant proprietorship be thus permanently and happily established; it does not therefore follow that the matter there ends. What happened in France, as a result of the Revolution, furnishes neither analogy nor precedent for what will happen in Italy. Peasant ownership in Italy will take on no such character, will provide no such anti-social phenomena, as we find in the peasant owners of France. The Italian peasant and the French constitute a quite complete antithesis. It is not to be denied that the French peasant is moved by monetary and narrow family considerations; nor that he is unsocial in both his actions towards others and in his labour on his land. The Italian peasant, on the other hand, is not primarily moved by money; while along with his desire to possess his own life and act in his own way along with

his inability either to be a machine or to use one, runs a continuous stream of inclusive kindness. His neighbourliness is indispensable to his individual being. Towards strangers, also, he is ever courteous, even chivalrously attentive. Besides all this, he will never work alone—no one ever saw him working alone. Whether he be peasant proprietor or agricultural employee, he must work in company. Individualist that he is in regard to the possession of himself and his land, as a worker he is incorrigibly social.

So it would seem that peasant proprietorship and co-operative labour must inevitably wed in agricultural Italy; and the co-operative labour will include much of the common life, eventually rendering it unprecedentedly free and happy. Of course, the matter is not so simple as I seem to have put it; nor is the conclusion to be so easily reached as I seem to indicate. The whole Italian agrarian movement is complicated by many divergencies, deflections and cross-currents. Yet two main lines are fairly distinct—the one leading to and intensifying peasant proprietorship, the other leading to an altogether communistic tenure and tillage. It is not easy to decide along which of these two main lines the larger tendency proceeds. In some regions, private ownership seems to be the inclusive end of the struggle; in others, an extreme Soviet ideal seems to be at work. But when the two main tendencies are studied in action, they are everywhere seen to be converging. When all the facts and forces, both

major and minor, are analysed and synthesised, the Italian agrarian revolt as a whole may be posited as a stage in an evolution which will result in a union of private ownership with co-operative cultivation and barter. The peasant-owners will co-operate in the tillage of the soil, in the purchase of seeds and tools, in the marketing of their produce: gradually, but totally, the middleman or traditional profiteer will be eliminated. And, since the Italian farmer, like his industrial fellow-worker, is an extremely intelligent person, he will come to economic knowledge by native instinct. And this knowledge will ultimately lead him to base his ownership of the land, his co-operative agricultural activity, along with the well-being and happiness thus secured, upon a system of taxation whereby the government supports itself by the appropriation of that economic increment of the land which only society earns. And this Italian solution—this synthesis of peasant proprietorship and co-operative agricultural labour and barter—the whole based upon the seizure of economic rent by the national community—will, I prophesy, become the ultimate land system universal. For it is the only system that takes account of the economic facts and spiritual forces of the human creature. |

VI

THE STRIFE OF THE EXTREMES

ONLY in Italy could a sort of civil war be carried on amidst disregarding populations going gaily about their daily affairs. One is carried back to the times wherein the creators and the creations of the Renaissance arose in a Florence whose every palace was an armed fortress, with wars between the families the normal condition of the streets. One remembers how that long line of marvellous men, from Saint Francis to the great Leonardo, performed their unequalled tasks amidst City-States, wherein successive despots ruled by the law of assassination ; and wherein no man and no people knew what new strife and ruin the morrow might bring. Those tumultuous splendid yesterdays are surely ancestral to the Italy of to-day—an Italy straitened with the pangs of new birth ; an Italy haunted as well as instinct with a splendour that, because it is spiritual, surpasses infinitely the splendours of the great yesterdays ; yet an Italy teeming with a civil tumult betimes uncontrollable. While the Government is proposing a momentous adventure in social solution to the people, while the land quickens to the call of a new human springtime, Fascisti and Communists are fighting in the streets of the towns

and along the country highroads. Yet the effect produced upon the mind of the world is extraordinarily disproportionate to the effect produced upon the Italian populations. The strife between these two extremes is serious enough in all conscience, as every Italian publicist anxiously knows ; yet to the populace it seems but incidental to a period of transition, and creates incredibly little derangement of the common life.

But the strife is no less there, raging up and down the peninsula, constituting not only a sad phenomenon, but a critical problem of the national life ; a phenomenon clouding the Italian prospect with doubt, and threatening the better being of the nation. The future place and power of Italy among the nations, as well as the success or failure of her Government's beneficent programme, will depend much upon how soon and into what issues the strife be resolved.

Yet the roots of the present strife are not of Italy—they are an importation. And this, too, recalls the past. It is the recurrent tragedy of Italy's history that there have always been exterior forces interested in her disruption. There have always been Powers beyond the Alps seeking to divide the Italian people. This was as certainly true during the World-War as it was during the Middle Ages, or as it was during the struggles preceding the Risorgimento. Caporetto was largely due to an intensive German propaganda—an imported propaganda aided, alas, by responsible Italians. Prior to Caporetto, a foreign bureau was maintained in Switzerland for the purpose of inspiring and subsidising a revolution that would take Italy

out of the war. After the Armistice, and up to a few months ago, Lenin sent his labourers to reap what he thought to be a ready Bolshevik harvest : he confidently expected Italy to follow Russia in the establishment of a Soviet state. At the same time—nor at all paradoxical to such as understand—certain foreign financial and governmental interests, fearful of a possible rivalry resulting from the general recovery of Italy, also worked—but covertly and not openly—for her national impotency. As much from the capitalist West as from the more candid Soviet East—and more from Italy's formal Allies than from all her formal enemies—came the influences making for division.

Thus it came about, as a result of the open Bolshevik propaganda on the one side, as a result of the secret propaganda of financially controlled foreign Powers on the other, that Italy was, for months at a time, in a state of almost continuous industrial and civil tumult. There were strikes everywhere, and mostly for political reasons. Public services were paralysed : a train or telegram or letter might or might not reach its destination. The tramcars of a city were stopped only because an employee had a quarrel with a passenger. The railwaymen refused, whether rightly or wrongly, to conduct convoys of arms and soldiers. Electrical workers left cities in darkness. Social security—even social probability—seemed extinct. And whoever did not know well the Italian people could not conclude otherwise than that Italy was in the way of becoming Bolshevik.

It was in the Emilia that the conditions were

worst. The masses of these provinces are Socialists of the extreme left ; and a virtual dictatorship of the proletariat had been in existence for years before the war. After the war, the dictatorship grew daily more irrational and ruthless. Boycotts embittered personal relations to a high degree. Whoever did not accept the conditions imposed by the Socialist Leagues was exposed to reprisals. The baker would not sell him bread, the shoemaker would not furnish him shoes. Even if he died, his body would not be buried if the grave-diggers belonged to one of the Leagues. The clergy suffered also : in certain regions the Socialist Parties demanded an income from the revenues of the Church ; the people would be forbidden to go to Mass, only because a village priest had employed a boycotted peasant, or had made hay in a boycotted field. The League would exact a tribute from this bourgeois and that, according to his wealth or according to the gravity of his offence against some edict of the League. Signor Prezzolini declares the régime thus established to have been worthy of the Middle Ages.

It was against this increasing violence, and because of the practical breakdown of social organisation, that the Fascisti arose. The roots of the movement reach back to the national revival succeeding the disaster of Caporetto and culminating on the Piave. It was the young men of that revival, again rising spontaneously throughout Italy, that constituted themselves into the Fasci. Their originating purpose was the ending of a social disorganisation of nearly two years' duration. And it is a curious phenomenon

of the movement that its chief should be Benito Mussolini, a former Socialist editor and leader, who separated himself from the Socialist Party because of his advocacy of Italy's participation in the war.

The Fascisti groups, but loosely held together, varying according to the characteristics of their respective regions, at first consisted largely of young men of the upper middle classes, though some were of the nobility. The major groups were composed of students, ex-officers, and demobilised Arditi; but now there are among them an increasing number of workers, and of the sons of peasants and smaller shopkeepers. Indeed, in some cases, groups of Socialists and workmen—such as the Socialist League of Ferrara, and a band of railway workers of Florence—have passed over entirely to the Fascisti. Doubtful elements are among them, of course, whence they are in some degree compromised by men who are more or less adventurers. But, all in all, they are young men, says Prezzolini, “daring and disposed to let their heads be broken, or to break the heads of their adversaries.” And the most amazing fact of their movement is their exercise of a power out of all proportion to their numbers. Relatively small bands of Fascisti have reduced large communities to submission—sometimes communities that were overwhelmingly of the revolutionary Socialist faith.

Yet the Fascisti must not be taken for mere reactionaries. They stand to a certain degree for social reforms, and they indeed rival the Communists in the bitterness of their feeling

against war-profiteers. Also the agrarian revolution, returning the lands to the peasants as it does, receives from the Fascisti an urgent advocacy. And recently they have forcibly brought down the cost of living, almost throughout the whole of Italy, by means almost as humorous as they were startling and efficacious.

But, of course, it was against the Bolshevist propaganda the Fascisti arose, and against this propaganda it still proceeds, purposing no less than its complete suppression—or else conversion. Thus, degree by degree, they have practically destroyed the earlier Bolshevist manifestations and possibilities throughout Italy, rendering a real service to their country in a time of portentous crisis. And this notwithstanding the doubtful elements among them, or the reprehensible extremes to which they have latterly gone. Fascismo represents, as Prezzolini has said, “a justified reaction against the excesses of the Socialists.” “If,” he continues, “their resources are forced upon them, as certain people believe, by the industrials, it is none the less true that the reaction is often quite spontaneous, and that the public opinion of the populations, tired of the violences of the Socialists, also helps the movement.” He asks us to remember, too, “that in Italy the political parties are not always well defined or separated. Italy is a country in which public opinion has a great force, and disposes of the masses between the political parties. These masses follow occasional considerations more than principles, and they are influenced by the Press and by the brilliancy of certain energetic men.”

"Fascismo," he concludes, "is very probably only a passing phenomenon; it will disappear. But, for the moment, it is a phenomenon of great importance, and one which we must face in its reality."

Yet it must not be supposed that the violence of the Socialists of the left, seduced and deluded as they were by the representatives of Moscow, and producing its own nemesis in the form of the Fascismo, had either the sympathy or the support of true Socialist leaders. The Socialist Party of Italy has produced some remarkable men—some unusually able leaders of noble quality. No abler or braver Italian than Leonidas Bissolati has ever appealed to the Italian people. Turati has the mental and moral equipment of a high order of statesmanship, the capacities of a great minister. Serrati, though standing somewhat to the left, is nevertheless a man of judgment and discretion, as well as of unquestioned integrity. D'Aragona and Treves, more directly representing labour than those I have named, are men of both political wisdom and force of character. These have all, each in his own way, sought to lead Italian Socialism along the path of a peaceful revolution, accomplished by constitutional procedure. They have not compromised the Socialist ideal: but they hold that this ideal can be realised only through the education of the workers, through political conquest and experience. At Congress after Congress, they have tried to prevent the disruption of the Socialist Party—till recently the strongest and most united political force in Italy. The

attitude of these responsible leaders has always been one of conciliation, so much so that, when the left withdrew at the Congress of Leghorn—taking the name of the Communist Party, according to orders from Moscow—Turati and d'Aragona withheld any condemnation of the separatists. They have also tried, as I have already pointed out, to rally the Party to the support of the Government Bill. And the repudiation of their action by the Party Executive, instead of strengthening the Socialist cause, in reality served the dearest desire of the super-capitalists.

Nor did the separatists act in ignorance of what they did. They were in possession of the report of their own representatives concerning conditions existing in Russia. In the spring of 1920, an Italian Socialist delegation was sent to Russia with instructions to ascertain the success or failure of the revolutionary régime. The mission returned to Italy in a state of disillusionment as regards Soviet Russia. In the report of Serrati, who had previously favoured the Moscow International, one may read a fearful indictment of the Bolshevist rule. "There is nothing left but a brute mass, incapable of organic conception, hating work, resigned to misery, to obedience, and to death!" "There is no liberty of the press or personal liberty, but terrorism holds subject more than a hundred million people." "The ignorant masses are grouped in peasant labour armies, which do little work and do that little badly." Nor are the impressions of d'Aragona any less vivid or antagonistic to the Soviet

society. "Russian industry continues to retrograde, and it cannot regenerate until many years have passed—until, the blockade removed, a different system of control than the present one has been established." "Half the town-dwellers of Northern Russia will perish of cold and starvation during the coming winter." "Because of lack of nourishment, individual production is less than thirty per cent. of what it is in normal times." Yet despite this deterring knowledge—as well as despite the restraining influence of Serrati and d'Aragona—the advocates of violence continue their essentially Bolshevist apostolate. Strangely enough, too, neither the champions of the Proletarian Dictatorship nor the Anarchist advocates are themselves of the proletariat. They are generally, if not always, the offspring of the aristocracy or the intelligensia they would destroy. Just as Lenin is a noble, Krassin a great industrialist, Bombacci a former school teacher, so is Professor Graziadei, a violent Italian communist, not only a man of wealth, but retains his seat in a university under the direction of the government he would destroy, and Gramsci, of Turin, is a student and idealist of rarest qualities.

So the strife of the extremes continues. And its continuance can only strain and imperil the Italian social structure. For the continuance, too, a solemn and very heavy responsibility rests now with the Fascisti. It is they who now have the power, having overcome the violence against which they rose. If they would now surely and sanely serve Italy, they must stand as strongly

for social conciliation, for an inclusive civil freedom, as they formerly stood against the terrorisation of the nation by a single class. Granting the patriotic origin of the Fascisti, granting they have saved Italy from anarchy, they must perceive that *in violence rests no permanent redemptive or preservative social force. Violence cannot really cure the evils which violence has created. Violence begets only violence in the end.* Just as the violence of the Socialist left begot the violence of the Fascisti, so will the violence of the Fascisti, if it continue, produce a Bolshevist renaissance. They will thus thwart the fulfilment of Italy's greatest modern opportunity—the opportunity presented by her Government's programme of social solution and conciliation. And, moreover, they will thus be taking the course precisely desired by Lenin and his disciples.

Will the young men of the Fasci, upon whom so great a weight of responsibility thus rests, read to-day the true meaning of their victory? Will they now go on to that greater victory, without which the victory they have won is worse than useless—is indeed but a victory for the forces of darkness? Will they stand, in this the high-tide of their success, for a new freedom comprehending the whole social body? Will they rise against the terrorisation of the Socialist by the public, just as they rose against the terrorisation of the public by the Socialist? The future of Italy not only, the future of all humanity also, waits now upon what answer their actions give. If the answer be nay, then will the Fascisti, following the

fatal historic course of all such movements as theirs in the past, become but worse oppressors of the people they went forth to deliver. If the answer be yea, then soon may these young men, become thus apostles of conciliation and a fairer freedom, enter upon a triumph increasing infinitely the spiritual fund of the Italian peoples, resourcing them anew and anew consecrating them to their historic quest. Let them henceforth aspire to such a triumph ; and in pursuit thereof, let them re-inspire themselves with words spoken by Italy's last great inspirer, Giosuè Carducci, when making fiery appeal to the students of Padua. "Let not the weak, the anæmic, the sceptical, come to provoke us ; let them not come to deprive us of the Ideal, to deprive us of God. Recreants ! The Ideal was so stored up in our fathers' souls and in ours that, merely in freeing itself and confounding the false prophets, it revealed a people to itself, renewed a nation, determined the fate of an historic epoch. The God of love and of sacrifice, the God of life and of the future, the God of the people and of humanity, is in us, with us, and for us. . . . Be good and have faith : have faith in love, in virtue, in justice : have faith in the high destinies of the human race, which mounts, glorious, along the ways of its ideal transformation."

The appeal comes not only to the Fascisti—to the youth of Italy : it comes with equal force to the whole Italian citizenry. It comes to the possessors of economic power, to the owners of the machinery of production, bidding them discern the historical doom of the old

order ; bidding them be wise in this their perhaps last valley of decision ; bidding them so to consent and so to act that the passing of the old shall be identical with a providential coming of the new. It comes to the workers, bidding them perceive that their every act of violence is but the lifting of their hands against themselves. It comes to all Italians, bidding them now for the sake of Italy, now for the sake of the whole family of man, absolve themselves of their divisions—divisions to-day tearing down the golden gates inviting Italy to enter immediately upon the mission which all her prophets have proclaimed as her divine portion among the nations.

The world is blood-drunken, and staggers towards an ageless spiritual torpor. More wanton grow the wounds mankind inflicteth upon itself. Whole peoples are being transformed into wolf-packs. Civilisation is becoming the wilderness and the howling-place of governments growing ever more bestial. Amidst the universal horror, the soul of Italy still lives and strives ; and that soul is able even yet to speak, I believe, the word that goes forth for the healing of humanity—a word empowered to end the ancient delay, to answer the ancient question, whereof the Titan painter cried to his Vittoria :

Blind is the world ; and evil here below
O'erwhelms and triumphs over honesty :
The light is quenched ; quenched too is bravery :
Lies reign, and Truth hath ceased her face to show.
When will that day dawn, Lord, for which he waits
Who trusts in Thee ? Lo, this prolonged delay
Destroys all hope and robs the soul of life.

VII

THE NEW RENAISSANCE

WHICHEVER of the Alps you cross, you are at once aware, on coming into Italy, of an ongoing of life contrasting so startlingly with the life whence you came as to seem either unreal or miraculous. You have left behind you a world grown old and weary and dry of soul—a world upon which the gods seem to lay some mysterious disablement, some cosmical despair. But the Italian world into which you have come seems riotous with hope, as if the childhood of the race were about to be renewed. Time is as young, nature is as human, the wonder of life just as pagan and as present, as if you were in the Tuscany of two or mayhap four thousand years ago. You find excitement and tumult, to be sure ; yet amidst all, and despite all, and despite the war's manifold disappointments and its human and material cost, you behold a new human springtime buoyantly blossoming. You are transported yet bewildered. You had forgotten that these Italians never grow old. And when you thus unexpectedly find them as fresh as if the years of battle and death and betrayal had not been, as resurgent and unbaffled and impossible to

bind, you feel yourself, as Robert Louis Stevenson would probably have said, in the presence of a people whom God likes.

It is no use trying to account for the phenomenon—at least not closely. The Italian has always been like that—as far back through the centuries as we know anything about him. But one may venture this—that his perennial youth is due to the precise cause of our chief complaint against him: that is, the Italian has never bowed down to the god of sheer efficiency. He has never submitted his life to material measurements; has never admitted that the worth of a man or a nation consisteth in the abundance of the things which the man or the nation hath; has never looked upon the human race as existing for the production and barter of things.

But it is the development rather than the explanation of the revival that is the concern of this chapter. According to Professor Paolo Emilio Pavolini, a most cultured and comprehending critic, its first and most meaningful characteristic is its "vulgarisation of letters." The social question, in all its aspects; questions of foreign policy, in all their ramifications; these have so entered into the common life as to compel writers who would treat of them to use its language. Nor is it only these who have been forced from the academy into the public square: writers upon every sort of subject, even the apostles of "pure literature," more and more speak the tongue of the people. The common intellectual eagerness has invaded the schools, also, so that they are filled with

discussions of the new and more social pedagogy. The demand for larger culture has resulted, too, in a considerable popularisation of the numerous institutes of French, English and German literature. It has at the same time manifested itself in the amazing number of schools and clubs which have sprung up among workmen, eager not only for a knowledge of social economics, but for the literature, both classic and current, of all nations. And the researches of the specialist, even though they be more profound than formerly, are now presented in a language and form that has the common man in view. It may be, thinks Professor Pavolini, that this intellectual revival pervades the common life all the more deeply and prophetically because it springs from no Dante, from no single commanding figure, but is rather compelled by the ongoing rebirth of industrial society. In any case, it is with the desire for industrial and social regeneration that every phase of intellectual expression must now reckon.

So inclusive, indeed, as well as popular, are these questions of life and society that the various intellectual and philosophical cults, so numerous and militant in Italy before the war, have disappeared. And the literary pre-war Chauvinism—which Benedetto Croce declares to have been mainly a French importation—has been dissolved in a literary nationalism springing from Mazzinian roots, and looking, one may fairly say, to a Christian solution of both historic and present problems. Even journalism—which in Italy maintains a higher intellectual character

than in any other country—must constantly deal with matters of social philosophy and international morality. One has only to peruse editorial articles by such as Professor G. A. Borgese and Dr. Giulio Caprin for evidence of the superior quality of the journalism of Italy.

“This vulgarisation of literature is really a response,” says Pavolini, “to the prodigious and unprecedented love for reading and culture which grew up after the war. Thus we find, in the artistic field, reviews printed with a quite unprecedented luxury of paper and of reproduction (for instance the ‘Dedalo’ of Ugo Ojetti and ‘Il Primato’ of Podrecca); in the critical field, the phenomenal diffusion of newspaper articles and articles from reviews, which are continuously gathered and republished in book form; in the literary field, the innumerable translations from French, English, German, Spanish, Russian and even remote oriental languages: not all of them really good, and often the choice made without discernment, but whoever is thirsty of letters and of culture does not choose the drink given to him very critically. We must therefore not complain about these phenomena: even if we deplore the low tastes of a not small part of the public. Of this taste and for it has been born the so-called ‘entertaining’ literature, whose capital is in Milan and whose chief representative is Guido da Verona; and with his cinematographical titles, and his covers embellished with nude women, he inundates all the windows of the bookstores in the Kingdom. These volumes are having quite an incredibly high number of editions, they

are sold at a rather high price, and their publishers and authors gain hundreds of thousands of lire. We understand it, because it is the literature of the 'nouveaux riches,' who thirst for enjoyment and prodigality. The only merit of this vain and somewhat disgusting inundation is, that it has closed the way to the French novels which before the war dominated our book market."

But the chief purport of this new passion for reading, indiscriminate as it is, pervading as it does the whole Italian social body, is its preparation for the prophetic literary leadership, perhaps more potential than manifest as yet, that seems about to call to young Italy. In fact, the high intellectual promise of Italy lies in just this dual manifestation—the precipitate and universal thirst for knowledge, for reading on every sort of subject, and the growing seriousness and high resolve on the part of so many special literary and scholastic leaders. There is every promise that the popular thirst will ultimately be quenched by the springs of life bursting forth in response to this new leadership's authentic word. About this Pavolini has no doubt. Nor has Italy's illustrious philosopher, Benedetto Croce. And Croce is sure, also, that in Italy, more than in any other country, "reigns a large spirit of sympathy and esteem for other peoples"; and that this spiritual internationalism is rooted in the ancient mental habit of Italy—in a history which reveals "political wisdom, equilibrium, good sense, horror of exaggeration, as all a part of the nature of the Italian people." He

is also certain that, as the economic, scientific and literary life of mankind becomes ever more international, the Italian people, because of both historical tradition and the present state of the national soul, is highly disciplined for serving this developing universal society.

Another thing is certain: the new Italian literature will not take its cue from d'Annunzio. D'Annunzio will indeed have his due as a master and an artist, and also as a patriot—for without him Fiume would have been lost to Italy—but the day of his school is done. Not to him nor his art, nor to the like of these, does the younger intellectual life of Italy to-day look. That literary chemistry of the senses, that artistic glorification of moral disease, of cruelty and sodden brutality, which is the solemn code of the French novel and drama, and which has its climax in d'Annunzio, has mayhap made its last appeal to Italy. The search of the Italian is now for spiritual and social verities. He is seeking out paths for the soul of man, and for verbal pictures whereby to disclose them. And the quest has its prophet, for the moment, in Giovanni Papini—in Papini turning aside to spend long months in preparing an account of Christ that shall appeal to the people.

As to philosophy, one may behold chiefly a reaction toward Hegel. It is indeed an extreme post-Hegelianism that now holds the field. Even such resurrections of Hegelian oppositions as Croce has attempted do not satisfy Giovanni Gentile or Guido de Ruggiero. A full-winged and untrammelled idealist is de Ruggiero.¹

¹ His work on Modern Philosophy has recently been

For him "philosophy emerges from the restricted specialism of the schools and is historical reality itself in the fulness of its manifestations ; it is the reflected consciousness of the world, *the invisible God manifested in the visible world.*" History is to him, apparently even more than to Hegel, "the phenomenological process of the spirit." But this reaction is no theme for mockery, even on the part of the Physicists, the New Materialists, the Behaviourists, to say nothing of the latter Pragmatists who so unreasonably claim William James for their father. The reaction in philosophy but betokens that high seriousness, that search for man's reason for being, which is so distinctly the *leitmotiv* of the whole Italian intellectual revival.

The intellectual revival is not so manifest in painting and sculpture. But the signs are there—not so much in the new tendency of art as in the utter end of old tendencies. "Futurism" and "Cubism," with all their progeny, and with their undue assumption of authority, are among the things of yesterday. They have no place in the Italian attention of to-day. For that matter, it was only by themselves they were ever taken seriously. And their origin, too, was French. There is reaction, it is true, but it is toward classicism, and in the way of a search for art's profounder meanings. It is a reaction that renews Carducci's scorn of "Art for Art's sake." Yet the classicist tendency is not merely a new imitation : it is

issued in English in the Library of Philosophy (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.).

really a return to the spirit, to the motives and interpretative powers of the great ancients. And this classical revival has been stimulated by the two recent centenaries of Leonardo da Vinci and of Raphael ; it has also received, along with Italian letters, a profound inspiration from the Dante centenary.

But the most significant indication of the state of mind in which Italian art now finds itself, has been best analysed, so far as I know, by Riccardo Nobili, a very keen and just Italian critic, apparently better known to English and American readers than to Italian. The significance and promise of the newer Italian art lies in what Signor Nobili calls its period of "Mutism." The artists of other nations have tried—have indeed felt obliged to try—to paint the war, just as the poets have felt obliged to sing it. What surprised Nobili, after visiting the different expositions since the armistice, was the fact that the war seemed not to have touched the painter. So far as the expositions were concerned, his first thought was : to the artist the war had not been. Of course, there were some of the older painters who felt obliged to essay the battles ; but they were few and negligible. Italian painters as a whole, by some native but rare instinct, had let the war alone. Most of them had been to the front, had participated in all the horror and slime and blood ; had taken part in scenes which were but mildly fore-echoed by Dante's *Inferno*. And they had come back to their ateliers dumb. The war simply could not be painted. The greatest catastrophe through which historic mankind had ever passed

was beyond the reach or power of art—indeed beyond the understanding of the mankind that had suffered it. The Italian artist felt that it was stupid to attempt to paint it, or to more than hint at it in backgrounds of his pictures. The horrors of war, as they had been painted by the artists of old, constituted but a cheap and misleading melodrama to the artist who had fought and come back alive. This was no time, thought Nobili, for “Cyrano de Bergeracs of the brush or chisel.” Heroics became disgusting in the presence of the sacrifices of whole peoples in a universal struggle that will for long remain inexplicable, and the sources of which are doubtless in other worlds than the one we see. The characteristic of all the Italian artists who came back—indeed of the fighters as well—was one of reticence. The things they had seen and done could not be reported by speech or symbols. It were mockery to talk about them, to write about them, to paint them. And it is in this sober renunciation of present effort, in this pregnant “Mutism” of which Nobili speaks, that the promise of the new Italian art lies. For it is an art that will not trifle with truth; that will not desecrate what is too great for portrayal by attempts that can only be paltry and misinforming at best. The Italian artist will therefore—and this is according to the very logic of the Italian national character—be silent about the great catastrophe. “What coruscation of colours,” exclaims Nobili, “could give the true idea of the war, what vermilion paint the blood, what hues stolen from the blaze

of Vulcan depict burning cities and blasted mountains, and the battle and death of thousands amidst the unnamable horrors of the trenches !” There is naught for the artist but to take the war’s experience into his soul, to wait patiently for its fruition, and meanwhile turn his brush or chisel to things less cosmical and more comprehensible.

Yet there is no despair, no groping in the dark, in the Italian school now in its beginnings, even if its guiding light be as yet dim. It is merely that the new Italian art is content to walk for a time in a renunciatory way. And this, in the mind of Nobili, constitutes its spiritual genius and its potential greatness. The artist, after the great catastrophe, understands that art is now called to a period of “raccoglimento”—to spiritual self-discovery and synthesis. This art will not take refuge in some new or old futurism, or in some new and daring technique, but will rather enter upon a period of meditation, of both spiritual adventure and tentative experiment. It is this which distinguishes the new Italian art—this that so significantly sets it apart from the immediate art of other nations, and that makes it so vital a part of the new intellectual revival.

But it must not be thought that the Italian revival is purely a thing of letters and of art. In science, too, may be noted fruitful activity and progress, chiefly in mathematics, physics and biology. And Italian research is always international in scope and sympathy—as may be seen by random perusal of its well-known review, *Scientia*. It is also manifesting itself in the

urgent practical ends to which eminent specialists are turning their attention and applying their knowledge. For instance, the most comprehensive programme of social providence yet submitted to any country has been presented to Italy by Dr. Ettore Levi, now at Rome, but formerly a professor in the Medical Academy of Florence. While I cannot here go into details of his stupendous project, I may state that it is one that literally comprehends the entire social being of the nation. It involves a national ramification and application of such an inclusive social foresight as must ultimately provide a healthy home for every family; a room for every person; a full education for every child; and an opportunity to each citizen for a complete life. I mention the project of Dr. Levi, not because it is exceptional, but because it is typical of the living activism attending the Italian revival.

Of the part of music in the revival, there is less to say. There are not wanting signs, however, of a reaction against the musical melodrama which has so long possessed the Italian people. It may be that Verdi and Puccini and the rest will give place to composers worthy of the divinest of the arts. There are signs, too, of the end of French domination—of the prettinesses and puerilities, as well as the brilliant mental derangement, so characteristic of the modern French school. Chief among those creative of the new tendency is Ildebrando Pizzetti, Director of the Academy of Music in Florence, and composer of the marvellous music for d'Annunzio's "*Fedra*." He has become

the founder of an essentially new school of composers—a school which has now quite emancipated itself from its earlier French influence. This school of Pizzetti, with whose name must be linked that of Francesco Malipiero, is characterised by “a revolt,” says Henrietta Straus, “against that slipshod and irregular relationship between the text and the score, in which the voice is supreme, and which is ever ready to sacrifice dramatic action and continuity to effective recitative and aria; against, too, those arid wastes of Wagnerian declamation which, in the end, leave one thirsting for a lyrical oasis.” But the revolt is accompanied by an ideal—“a desire for a more perfect marriage, a more spiritual union, between the verblativity and the music.” It is thus that “Fedra” is “almost a model of musical declamation, in which the lyrical flow is unbroken by either recitative or parlando, or the orchestral development by isolated episodes of programmatic character.” This passion for unity, for the elimination of “everything that may clog the action or mar the unity of the component factors, has been carried to even greater extreme by Malipiero.” His “Orpheo” Henrietta Straus considers to be, “with its marvellously woven texture, its wonderful play of emotional lights and shades, the most boldly conceived musical form that the Italy of to-day has given us.” And also must be noted, in this relation, the curious adventures in futurist music on the part of Marinuzzi. But, better than all else, these young masters seem to be seeking to re-unite Italian

music with those sacred sources from which Beethoven drew the breath of his art supreme—Palestrina and Cherubini and their lesser followers. Thus Italian music will become once more the music of worship, the music of the soul, which is the only true music. Indeed, if music be not essentially devotional, if it exalt not and refresh not the spirit of man, it is not music. But this music will not come, be it said, except as the divine fruit of a new spiritual springtime.

But the portents of the spiritual springtime are many: the rumours of its coming, and the glad trouble of it, are abroad in the Italian soul. It is this, above all else, that the intellectual revival foreshadows and prepares. It could not be otherwise in Italy. For the Italian mind peculiarly combines insistence upon analysis with purposeful capacity for synthesis; and the union of these two qualities always converts intellectual research into a quest for spiritual reality, for human roots and meanings. And the quest for the roots and meanings of life releases the mind from trammels and rigidities, setting it free for adventure and discovery. No hostages are thus required for the inquiring intellect: it may go forth upon its quest without obligations, save to win the truth, and to render it to the soul of man. Unless it be truth that is workable, truth that is humanly applicable, the Italian intellect will not be satisfied: truth which is not usable is no truth at all. It is the quest of this order of truth which keeps the Italian mind from the fogs wherein the German mind loses itself; and from the sterile logic and the brilliant super-

ficialness of the French intellect. And it is this that converts even the scientific research of the Italian into human idealism or spiritual revelation. "Truth," once said Carducci, "conceived under all its aspects by a great and serene intellect, by a lofty and pure nature, becomes of itself ideality."

Thus, borne on by the quest for truth, Papini turns from futurist art and politics, and from an earlier and somewhat d'Annunzian nationalism, to an apostolic advocacy of the need of men and nations for the Christ. Except in the conversion of men and institutions to Christ, so preaches Papini, nothing can save the Italian nation ; naught else can save civilisation from disintegration. And it is a sign of national renewal, of spiritual as well as intellectual virility, that Papini is superseding d'Annunzio as Italian master. Then we find Giovanni Amendola, a former associate of Papini in Florence, turning from his promising philosophical career to politics. A desire to invest political action with spiritual reality was the reason Amendola gave the writer for his change ; and one may well pray that so gifted a man prove true to his initial purpose, and be not seized by the evil forces which so universally wait upon the possession of political power.

But most of those engaged in the new spiritual quest, following the example of Papini, are keeping apart from active participation in politics. And many if not most of them are either present or recent students of universities. In the University of Naples you will find—if

you are fortunate enough to gain access to the midst of those of whom I speak—some remarkable modern Quietists, living saintly lives of sincere austerity, preparing themselves for regenerative service in the nation. And it is also in Naples that Professor Antonio Anile, while teaching anatomy in the University, and while also serving as a member of the Italian Parliament, is active in inciting his students to spiritual adventure, to self-discovery and self-discipline. In keeping with this effort, he has written a remarkable book, *La salute del pensiero*—"The Health of Thought."

The writer has come in contact with equally serious though differing groups among the younger citizenry of Rome. There is the Circolo Universitario di Studii Storico-Religiosi, recently inaugurated by Senatore Luigi Luzzatti, a former Prime Minister of Italy, who combines a clear insight into financial problems with an ardent interest in religious questions. Lectures are given before these students by such as Professors Bonaiuti, Formichi and Turchi. There is also the more Modernist movement, up till now opposed by the Church, led by Professor Bonaiuti, Professor of the History of Religion in the University of Rome, who combines great spiritual fervour with genuine criticism and superior scholarship. He has a group of attached followers, mostly students. He was recently excommunicated by the Church, but, upon his submission, the punishment was cancelled. With Professor Bonaiuti is associated Professor Nicola Turchi, also a priest. And one must take note of the group bearing

the name of the Independent Theosophical League, deserving mention because of its distinctive character and the serious work it performs in many directions.

In Milan there is a society of philosophic and religious studies, led by Professor Piero Martinetti, which is creating a philosophical library and organising public lectures for spiritual instruction, especially among the young intellectuals. There is another Milanese group, chiefly of literary men, but animated by high ideals, which cultivates "spiritual patriotism." Prominent among those constituting this group is Signor Ettore Cozsoni, editor of the beautiful editions, *L'Eroica*. There is Gianelli, a very active and ambitious Franciscan, who is organising a Catholic University of Milan. And in the North, also, is the serious assemblage at Turin called Gruppo Torinese per la Ricerca Spirituale. Its leader is Professor Vittorino Vezzani, who, like his colleague in Naples, combines severe scientific training with deep spiritual aspirations. He is also the editor of the review, *Ultra*, which records all the movements that are making for the revival of Italy.

But much more significant is the work of Father Pio, living humbly and ascetically in his convent near Foggia, and increasingly influencing Catholic Italy. Father Pio is a real son of Saint Francis. He has wonderful mystical experiences and manifests extraordinary yet actual spiritual phenomena, such as the stigmata. A powerful spiritual radiation and renewal falls upon his visitors.

Then, scattered throughout Italy, are the

Democratic Christians, working along moral and social lines. These groups tried independent political action at first, but have since renounced such action in favour of a more intensive work among the people. They publish a review, *Democrazia Cristiana*, at Bologna. One of their chief leaders is Giuseppe Donati.

It is in the Florence of to-day, however, as it was in the Florence of the fifteenth century, that the new human springtime is most urgently manifested—only now it is a spiritual revival; then it was intellectual. Florence is the most active centre of intellectual and spiritual communion between persons and groups of all nationalities. Significant of this—more significant than the barricades upon the opposite sides of which the Fascisti and the Communists lately fought—is the fact that the Municipality of Florence has adopted, by a unanimous vote of all parties, from the Conservative to the Socialist, Mazzini's *Duties of Man* as a reading book in all the public schools.

It is in Florence that the new Catholic Modernism is most manifest—up to the present time unrejected by the Church, and spreading forth from Florence unto other Italian cities. These new Modernists contend that within the Church itself the new and more spiritual society of man will find its sources and its realisation. They would even argue, and not without historic reasons, that the Church is the real Society of Nations. They would contend, too, that within the forms of the Church there is a possible infinite freedom for the pursuit of the human verities, and for the furtherance and fulfilment

of the true universal society. Among these groups are ardent new converts ; and these, as well as those who are hereditarily Catholic, accept the authority of the Church. Their apostolic inspirer was Giosuè Borsi, a brilliant literary man who became converted to the Church shortly before the war, and who wrote a notable *Colloqui*. The *Lettere* of Borsi are regarded by some as the most beautiful Italian literary issue of the war. He was passionately mystical, of the temper of Saint Augustine ; yet he was ardently Italian also, and went as a volunteer to the front, where he laid down his life. Of those creatively responsible for the continuance of this new Modernism (I use the term in a very broad sense) and forming an apostolate of the movement, are Professors Guido Ferrando and Piero Marrucchi. Ferrando, with his fine fervour and intellectual attainments, gathers many young men around him, leading them into a new catholicity of desire and understanding. Marrucchi's rare culture, his intellectual integrity, his sweetness and sanity of spirit, make his personality as well as his writing and teaching an irradiant spiritual force.

But the Modernist Movement is only one of numerous kindred activities in Florence. Of especially fair portent are the groups gathering about the Philosophical Library, founded some years ago by Mrs. Julia H. Scott, a revered and remarkable American woman. These groups are led and inspired by Dr. Roberto Assagioli, a young psychologist known to English and Americans, and possessed of an unusual discernment of mind as well as purity and power of spirit ;

and also by Professors Ferrando and Marrucchi. Under their direction, the Library is the centre of varied intellectual pronouncements and efforts, each with a spiritual purpose, and all marking a high tide in the spiritual spring-time. Crowded audiences gather to hear lectures upon innumerable subjects—upon the social psychology of Christ; upon Buddha and Buddhism; upon Tagore and Young India; upon William James and Walt Whitman; upon sexual education and civic morality; upon whatever men and movements may, in any and every part of the world, be making for the reconciliation of classes and nations. Also at the Philosophical Library was created the Association for Religious and Moral Progress, instituted by Professor Puglisi. It was initiated by a powerful appeal on the part of Senatore Alessandro Chiapelli for the creation of a spiritual synthesis of the east and the west, of inner regeneration and constructive activity. This appeal has appeared in the review, *Il Progresso Religioso*, published by the Association.

Dr. Assagioli would accredit the spiritual ferment in the Italian Youth to their "great dissatisfaction with old forms and old methods in every field: religion, philosophy, education, social and political activities. There is in them a deep yearning, a passionate impatience, for something new and better." They are "eagerly searching, looking into the past and toward the future, to the East and to the West," for somewhat to satisfy their spiritual hunger. "There is still confusion and groping," but the young men and women "are finding their way,"

and finding it through a quest that is at once "spiritual and practical, mystical and constructive." And Assagioli himself, if asked for his purpose, and if asked to state wherein it is typical of the Italian revival, would say that he is seeking the formation of a true "science of the soul"—in which science may be included a vital synthesis of all recent discoveries and developments of scientific psychology with the intuitions and inner experiences and methods of oriental spiritual experience and Christian mystical consciousness. He has recently expressed his conceptions in a course of lectures on "The Phases and Methods of Spiritual Development."

Also should be mentioned, in connection with Florence, the highly significant young women's movement of the "Lamp-Bearers"; for it is in Florence the international direction of the movement centres, in the person of Countess Matilde Marfori Savini. The movement was founded and is inspired by Miss Nella Ciapetti, a young woman of great spiritual and intellectual power. But the work of the Lamp-Bearers was preceded and predicated by the admirable movement started in Rome, under the name of Vita Morale, by Professor Guglielmina Ronconi, a true apostle of love, knowing the hearts of the women of Italy, and understanding the Italian peoples, even unto the downmost outcasts. The movement has taken its motto from Mazzini, and has made of his writings somewhat of a gospel. "We desire to feel," so runs a sentence in a Lamp-Bearer prospectus, "that there exists, under all the diversities of races, creeds or

tendencies of thought, the same fundamental and sacred humanity." These young women have a very complete programme of inner spiritual work, of individual regeneration, of mutual spiritual and practical help, of education on modern advanced subjects, such as the new free methods of teaching in the schools, sexual instruction, social work among the children of the workers. They also devote themselves to prison reform and moral help among the prisoners. And one of their chief purposes is the promotion of international goodwill and fraternity, through seeking to bring together in mutual understanding and various services the women of all nations and races.

The work of the Lamp-Bearers is, of course, but part of the great awakening and amazing progress among Italian women in recent years. Among these kindred movements may be named the *Unione delle Donne Cattoliche*, whose large membership is well organised and kept in hand by the Church authorities. These are doing useful social work, though of a restricted kind, and also somewhat in opposition to the more progressive feminist movements. Then there is the *Consiglio Nazionale delle Donne Italiane*, which promotes and co-ordinates the activities of all other free feminist movements. It is ably led by Gabriella Spalletti Rasponi, an indeed superior woman, who combines genuine religious fervour with clear intellectual insight and practical efficiency and adaptability. Under her wise leadership, the Italian feminist movements have avoided the excesses of militant feminism of other countries ; and this while working vigor-

ously for all the rights of women as citizens and for their education and preparation for public activity and position.

Nor, while we are still at the City of the Renaissance, must the unique and beneficent place, the very vitalising influence, of the British Institute be left out of account. Under the discriminating yet sympathetic direction of Dr. Spender, with whom is associated Professor Ferrando, this Institute, while not departing from its proper place and function, has yet lent itself so wisely and helpfully to Florence, that it has in itself become a chief centre of Florentine intellectual life. Here one may meet many English writers, especially poets, Mr. Herbert Trench, for instance, being one of the Institute's active founders. With these may be met Guglielmo Ferrero, who, perhaps more than any man living, has connected the history of the past with modern problems ; and who, by reason of his great literary gifts, has also made history intelligible to the common readers. And here one may meet the beloved dramatist, Sem Benelli, with his fellow-writers.

I have already indicated that it is the blend of high intellectual understanding with spiritual perception and purpose that characterises these Italian groups and movements. And this wedded intellectual understanding and spiritual purpose produces what might be called a glowingly optimistic pessimism. While hopeless concerning the present human order, it is at the same time apostolically confident of the hid presence and ultimate emergence of a human order radically and divinely new. The under-

lying idea of all present Italian spiritual movements, and also of the Italian intellectual revival, has been best expressed to the writer by Duca Colonna di Cesarò, an Italian deputy who is also a member of an ancient family. His twofold insistence is this: that civilisation has become so materialistic in its psychology, as well as in its economic facts and political processes, that it is better for mankind that it perish; but that, even so, we must stay the dissolution of the old as long as we can, in order to prepare ourselves spiritually for the creation of the new.

However that be, this is certain—that the problems of industrial and political society, so far as Italy is concerned, will ultimately be solved according to human values and affections. No problem, however fundamentally economic it be, however deeply it reaches to material roots and comprehends material processes, can be to the Italian merely material or economic: it is always a religious or affectional problem in the end.

Nor can any such problem ever escape the solving influence of the inherent and wholesome romanticism of the Italian. It is a part of the paradox of his mind that he is as romantic as he is scientific, as mystical as he is sceptical. He is at once too close to nature and too conversant with ritual to be otherwise: he is a weaver of romance, just as he is a singer and a poet, even in the making and the measurement of things. His economic problems all, as well as his questions of the soul's origin and destiny, will proceed to their solution amidst

that eternal procession of Pan, and through those sacraments and sanctions of Holy Church, which together keep Italy perennially young, and which convert so much of Italian labour into the likeness of the play of children. And indicative of this is Professor Vittorio Grandi's original and profound work, now in process of writing, on the drama and reconciliation of Pan and Christ.

The tremendous miracle of the common life still moves and rejoices the Italian in a way incomprehensible to the Anglo-Saxon and to the Italian's kindred Frenchman. Saint Francis, traversing the highways with "the courtesy of God" for his creed, his divine gaiety mocking the drama of his poverty, is a typification of the Italian country and nation; so also is Saint Clara, hardly seeking to translate her love for Francis into conventual duties. To the Umbrian of to-day, as to his two altogether lovely saints of yesterday, life is still a delightful pageantry. And in the Tuscan hills, invisible natural presences accompany the contadini across the fields and through the vineyards, and lurking dryads still look out upon him from ancient olive trees. The Solemn Mass and the vendemmia are still equally sacred. The young maiden's morning confession to her priest and her evening dance at the wine harvest are of one and the same spiritual sort. And all this blent and inseparable worship of Christ and Pan, with all the festology thereof, will inevitably affect and colour the Italian social transformation, and invest life and labour with the gladness and freshness of perpetual spring.

VIII

THE THIRD ROME

IF from the beginning it be obvious that these chapters are written by a lover rather than a critic, by an advocate rather than a judge, they are nevertheless inspired by other than the writer's predilection for Italy. The reason for their writing lies in that healing of the nation's which the writer sees, or seems to see, potential within the Italian domestic programme, and the Italian foreign policy. This programme and this policy carry in themselves the only governmental promise, up till to-day, of a developing *élan* sufficient to prevent the final catastrophe of our civilisation. And they are the witness that, alone among the nations, the Italian people—or some divine force still alive in this people—perseveres in a path appointed by historic ideals. Up till yesterday, at least, Italy was the one tolerably free country left in the world; up till yesterday, at least, Italy was the one remaining approximate democracy; up till yesterday, at least, Italy was the sole country that had kept the promises made during the war; up till yesterday, at least, Italy alone stood for reconciliation between classes and between nations.

In her insistent efforts toward reconciliation, Italy has indeed made herself an evangel of goodwill to the peoples of Europe. Highly prophetic of this were the words spoken by Count Sforza, at the time of the Roman Conference between Italy and the States succeeding the Austro-Hungarian Empire: "I trust, for all of us who come together here, that this will not be only for the advantages which we shall get out of it, but because we shall have again proved, with the incomparable eloquence of facts, that in the present society we cannot conceive of the economic well-being of one without connecting it indissolubly with the well-being of his neighbours." And, be it said, it is in accordance with the faith implicit in these historic words, it is in reliance upon the law which they affirm, that Italy is governmentally proceeding. It is the indissoluble membership of men in one another, it is the like membership in one another of the nations, that posits Italy's developing plans for her own and the world's redemption from millennial evils culminating in the war. It is thereupon that her adventure in industrial solution and her effort toward international conciliation now hand in hand proceed. And when her total programme is perceived and appreciated, when its courage is accounted together with its universal import, one permissibly may imagine Dante again saying of his countrymen, and with better reason than he said of the citizens of imperial Rome, "We behold them as a nation . . . putting aside avarice, which is ever averse to

the general welfare, cherishing universal peace and liberty, and disregarding private profit to serve the common weal of humanity."

Significant of the national spirit of this people is its manifestation of a magnanimity rare in the history of nations. If it be true, as Beethoven once said, that forgiveness is the highest spiritual genius, then has this spiritual genius, like a sacred fire, purged the soul of this people of the enmities of the war. For instance, while the Supreme Council continued its trifling with God and man, it was Italy that came to the rescue of the Austrians, sending the wheat that kept yet alive the inhabitants of the capital city of her ancient enemy. It was Italy that greeted the head of the Austrian Government, in the spring of 1920, not only with hearty welcome, but with sincere and reverent sympathy. It was Italy, poor as her populations were, that took thousands after thousands of Austrian children to her homes, to her cities and country-sides, giving these "enemy" children the same care she gave her own. It was the head of an Italian city who exclaimed: "This is our revenge, to wipe away the memories of enmity by rendering salvation to our enemies!"

Nor has Italy forgiven only her enemies—the German, the Austrian, the Croatian, the Bulgarian, and the Turk: she has done the infinitely harder thing: she has forgiven her Allies—from whom she in some senses suffered worse than ever she suffered at the hands of her enemies. Moreover—and equally extra-

ordinary—it is only in Italy to-day that one hears words of sympathy and understanding for Wilson. In England, one hears depreciation ; in France, one hears a revilement nearly equalling that visited upon this greatest of Americans, save one, by his countrymen. But in Italy you hear no syllable of bitterness against the man who stood so stubbornly against her, even unto the exhaustion of her resources. On the contrary—and wonderful to know—you hear the name of Woodrow Wilson coupled with that of Joseph Mazzini—surely the highest tribute that an Italian may render to mortal man.

Again, and in accord with the new spirit of the people, the Italian Government, alone among the Governments participating in the Great War, has fulfilled 'the promise made by President Wilson—and so ostentatiously and repeatedly ratified on British platforms during the days that were dark—that the end of the war should also be the end of secret diplomacy. Almost immediately on coming into power, Signor Giolitti presented to the Italian Chamber a Bill, consisting of a single clause, which reads as follows : "Treaties and international understandings, whatever their subject and their character, are only valid after they have been approved by Parliament. The Government of the King can only declare war with the approval of the two Chambers." And Italy alone, since the beginning of the fabled peace-making, has fulfilled her engagements. For instance, after signing the Treaty of Rapallo, she kept her word strictly—this a hostile Serbian diplomat

reluctantly admitted to the writer. "Since the Peace of Valona," said an Albanian chieftain, "Italy has kept her promise to us in spirit and in letter ; and now all Albania would fight for Italy, if ever she were attacked by another Power." "It is Italy alone," said a Turkish Minister, "that has dealt honourably with us among the Powers, and whose word we have been able to trust during the war and since." "Italy alone," said a Georgian prince, "has put the new diplomacy into honest practice in the Near East." And it is Italy alone that still struggles for the realisation of the Wilson principles in Europe.

Then among the stronger Powers assembled in the General Conference of the League of Nations at Geneva, November and December, 1920, Italy alone fought for the fulfilment of the promise by which the League of Nations had been initiated ; and without which fulfilment the League is but a contrivance whereby three Governments may pursue a super-capitalist exploitation of the planet. "Had Italy been backed by the States that would have liked to back her," wrote Mr. Robert Dell, a very keen and comprehending observer of the Conference, "things would, perhaps, have been different. Italian policy throughout the session . . . was towards international reconciliation and peace. No doubt this attitude was dictated by self-interest, but at any rate it is enlightened self-interest, which is more than can be said of French policy, and it happens to coincide with the interest of the world at large. If Italy

is now ruled by men with the sense to see that universal free trade would be to the advantage of Italy, that the continuance of an imperialist policy will ruin the country, and that Italian interests will not be served by the annihilation of Germany and Central Europe, so much the better for Italy and everybody else."

Now let it be kept in mind, when the ways whereby Italy has made herself an evangel of international goodwill be considered, that this attitude has not been induced by this group or that: it is the attitude which the Government has cultivated in the people. And the significance of this is too tremendous to admit of exaggeration. At a time when governments are passing into the hands of what might pardonably be called a self-glorified mediocracy, practising a pseudo-realism or political quackery constituting the crowning ignominy of a civilisation turning to imposture for salvation, this one people has withstood the abomination. In contradistinction to this now common sovereignty of imposturous men and methods, Italy is investing her wisest and best with the powers of government. Premier Giolitti has doubtless made many shifts in the course of his long career. For all that, he alone, among present administrative heads of State, discerns the early choice which civilisation must perforce make between regeneration and dissolution. And his discernment is evidenced by his choice of governmental associates. First beside him stands Count Sforza, his Foreign Minister, unquestionably the most serious as well as accom-

plished diplomat of Europe—indeed a true heir of Cavour. Sforza is economical in his use of words, and austere as to manners. But he is a practical idealist of the highest order. When, for instance—bespeaking the integrity of his own soul and the soul of Italy as well—he said that Italy placed the reconciliation of Europe before the indemnity due from Germany, he spoke with a divinely practical sense rare, in these days, among the councils of nations. His diplomacy bears the impress of Mazzini's expostulation to Daniel Stern: "Little it matters to me that Italy, a territory of so many square leagues, eats its corn and cabbages cheaper; little I care for Rome if a great European initiative is not to issue from it. What I do care for is that Italy shall be great and good, moral and virtuous, that she comes to fulfil a mission in the world."

There is, it is true, complaint that Sforza has conceded too much where the claims of Italy were concerned. But if Italians who complain had been behind the scenes presented by the meetings of the Supreme Council, they would better appreciate the saving services Sforza has rendered to his country. They would discern, too, the element of moral tragedy inherent in positions he has been obliged to take. Italy is not economically independent; and until she is, she cannot be wholly politically free. Italy's Allies are in a position, economically speaking, to beat her to her knees at any moment she too forcibly resists their decisions. Sforza has been obliged, time after time, to compromise

his personal ideals of right and justice for the sake of saving Italy from manifold disaster. But more than that—as the future historians will discover—Sforza has quite deliberately sacrificed his personal popularity with Italians in order that he might serve the true interests of Italy.

With Sforza stands the able and upright Bonomi, a statesman of superior wisdom and insight into the affairs of his country. There is also Benedetto Croce, the greatest among the living of those who make philosophy their trade. And the services of Minister Meda have been incalculable in restoring Italian finances to a securer basis. Labriola and Alessio have served highly not only Italy, but the peoples international, in the construction and advocacy of their Government's programme of industrial solution; nor is there a man in the Government who is not of high intellectual mark and moral quality, and who has not the welfare of both Italy and the world at heart.

Behind these stands the reticent and elusive personality of the King, helping on, so far as a king set over a democracy may, every good work, every cause of social betterment. And there lives no better man, no braver soul, no more enlightened ruler, no truer lover of his country and of humanity, than Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy. If fault must be found with this exemplary man and ruler, it is that he is too reticent; that he keeps himself too much in the background; that his regard for the constitution is over-scrupulous; that he does not use the power and the prerogatives which

are really and rightly his. "The King is put there for something," said a devoted and intelligent Italian to the writer, "and there are thousands of us who wish that he, with his intelligence and courageous goodness, would make himself felt more than he apparently does; the heart of the people is with him more than he realises, and would respond to him more than to the politicians if he would lead." Whether the criticism be judicious or not, whether or not the King does well and wisely to keep himself so far in the background, is not for a foreign observer to say. Of that only an Italian can speak. But this much is certain, however overshadowed the King chooses to be, however hid and quiet the currents of his influence, he is all for a national order that shall provide every Italian with the means and opportunity essential to the living of a complete life; and he is all for an inclusive concord and mutual freedom among the nations—a freedom and concord creative of that wedded heaven and earth whereof the soul of Italy ever dreams.

So, all in all, Italy stands to the writer as the citadel, assaulted and mayhap shaken, of civilisation's last hope. For the conclusive catastrophe comes apace, blindly forced by the very arrogance, by the precise repressions, wherewith the bearded Interests brutishly think to avert it. Over the peoples the Interests ride hard, with whips of scorpions scourging them awhile into servile submission. But if the reason for the world's being fail in its approaching last

effort ; if it be able to cast no restraining shadow upon the Interests and their wanton governments ; if the puerilities and putridities of their parliaments wax worse ; then we may be sure that the servility of the peoples will change not only into savage revolt, but into universal madness—into conflagrations consuming our civilisation's innermost core as well as its outermost forms. Then midst the ruins of the centuries, thorns and thistles will grow, and hairy human creatures creep ; and many bleak years, if not ages, will pass before the rebirth of history—before the coming forth of a human race willing to use worthily the infinite natural and spiritual resources that were always at hand, and always sufficient for the creation of the earthly paradise.

It is in this most crucial hour of the human ongoing that Italy remembers her historic Idea, and glimpses therein a worthy escape for her own and the international peoples. And thus is she repeating her own latter history. Italy came into the war at its most critical moment as the right flank of the Allies. She saved them. But by these she thus saved, and by the world at large, the services she rendered were not appreciated : on the contrary, they were—they still are—the subject of a depreciation as mischievous as it is malign. And to the future historian it will be one of the most insearchable curiosities of the war that Italy's claims, so territorially paltry, of so little economic value, were none the less set forth to the world by interested enemies—namely, her professed Allies

—as an imperialism second, only to that of Prussia in predatory purpose. Italy, in fact, became the victim of a propaganda that may be fairly termed hydrophobic. If the proverbial reader from Mars had taken his cue from *The Times* or *The New Europe*, he would naturally have thought that it was Italy, not Germany, with which the Entente and America were at war. And all this, notwithstanding that the cost of the war to Italy, when balanced by her resources and gains, greatly out-proportioned the cost of the war to her Allies. All the more is this true—and iniquitously true at that—when the price Italy paid and the little she received are contrasted with the enormous appropriations which the Entente Governments have made of territories of continental proportions, and replete with the sources of an unimaginable future wealth.

And so it is to-day. In a world cleft atwain by a dual reaction—a world wherein owners and workers are arming against each other for a “fight to the finish”—Italy stands again in the breach. The left wing of the reaction, indoctrinated and directed from Moscow, and thus ensouled with the idea of finding freedom in tyranny—this Italy has already met, and met victoriously: not in Italy will Bolshevism again lift up its head. But the greater fight—the fight against the reaction’s right wing—the fight against the repression and government of the peoples by a super-capitalist despotism—this fight is still on, is indeed but begun. And in this, as in her fight against the left, it is to

the worthy preservation of civilisation that Italy devotes her best men, her moral resources. But her Allies no more appreciate what she does for them to-day than they appreciated what she did for them yesterday. Instead of reverently helping her to a deliverance which would surely be to all peoples, the Great Powers would thwart her programme of industrial solution, and with it her policy of international conciliation, in order to secure the planetary hegemony of the masters they serve : the international money-lenders. Yet if the masters and their governments were wise, instead of looking upon the Italian initiative with derision or dread, they would greet it with bended knees of prayer for its realisation.

The heart of the world is still bitter and hounded, the eyes of the peoples are still blinded, by the treason of the Peace of Versailles. The makers of that Peace have invested mankind with a scepticism, with a cynicism, for which there is no precedent. Faith in a power that is spiritual ; faith in the practicability of what men commonly account good ; faith in either the sincerity, the authority, or the executancy of human ideals—it is this, along with blockaded millions of women and children, that the peace-makers have monstrosously put to death. It is from the graves of dead faith—as from the graves of the millions slain through economic war—that the peoples turn to the worship of the super-wolf : to sheer and unmoral might as their only law and saviour. And the shrines of the super-wolf,

newly raised from primeval human swamps, are attended with like reverence in London and Petrograd, in New York and Moscow. That the Bolshevist and the super-capitalist are like manifestations of one fundamental reaction—of one reaction to armed material might as the sole preservative and procurative law—of this the peoples have not yet taken knowledge.

But, even if the apparent triumph lies with Moscow, it is the super-capitalist who thus will prevail. For, mark it well, it is not the fabled proletarian revolution that will be Moscow's last word : it is the international financialism that is to-day encircling the world—reaching forth to convert the nations into a single profit-making machine—it is for this Moscow really, though all blindly, labours ; and it is this that will be the last word of the Bolshevist autocracy. It is unto this worst despotism, unto this extinguishing degradation of the human race, and not unto the proletariat, that the Bolshevist autocracy will render power and dominion. And it is over against this harshest of historic tyrannies, over against this extinction of whatever of worth our Christian era has produced, over against this negation of the really human life of man, that the Roman Government marshals its programme for an industrial solution initiative of a new society. And this programme, could it be fulfilled, would be but the realisation of the *leitmotiv* of Italian history.

I have often spoken, in the course of these chapters, of Joseph Mazzini, who was the heir of Dante, who was the heir of Virgil. Each

was possessed of the idea of an immanent but omnipotent empire, centred at Rome, but therefrom effecting a harmonious organisation of the world, perfect unto the last material detail, unto the last moral and mental enablement, and every part or people or man marching in step with every other part or people or man. And the last of the envisioned Triumvirate was at once the most enlightened and most ardent in his Roman faith. Looking out over the tendencies of his own world, Mazzini foresaw, he in many ways foretold, the catastrophe that has overtaken and engulfed the present world. He foresaw this catastrophe as the inevitable result of the materialism then becoming the content of both the policies and the psychology of nations. Nor saw he any prevention of the catastrophe, any redemption for the nations, any salvation for civilisation, in the movements and doctrines then making headway in Europe. In International Socialism, which he at first yearningly considered, he soon saw only the completion of the foreseen catastrophe through the delusion of the world's workers. By its materialist foundation and orthodoxy, by its basic principle of the class-war, by its Marxian concept of the Collectivist Society, Socialism had merely appropriated, he contended, the fundamental falsities of the capitalist society. To Mazzini, the conception of the worker as a well-kept cog in the wheels of an international economic machine was blasphemous and intolerable. So over against the Marxian idea, over against the collectivist tyranny of the Marxian State, he set

forth a social philosophy derived from Christ and from Dante, and not distantly akin to the creed of Peter Kropotkin. It was a philosophy predicative of a human order, in which freedom and association find their perfect fulfilment in each other.

In Mazzini's ideal of society—a society in which men are both socially united and individually free—he saw the realisation of the Third Rome. Indeed, it was by the initiative of this Third Rome, as well as under its worlded wings, that the nations would sit down together as one common family, around one common table of universal love. “Why,” he asks, “should not Rome—which has already twice given unity to the world, under the Cæsars and under the Popes—utter a third Word, of import still more vast, and consequences still more fruitful? Why should not the priest, himself a son of the people, elevate the hand that bears the martyr's cross, and sanctify with his blessing the crusade of the oppressed, in the pilgrimage ordained for them by God towards liberty, equality, and love?” Nor far from Mazzini's thought were the words of Sforza, spoken to the members of the Roman Conference to which I have already referred. “Permit me to consider it,” he says, “of happy augury for your labours that you are meeting in the city of Rome, which prides herself, more than on anything else, on her just claim to be the mother of righteous law.”

I do not say that the Italian initiative certainly promises the Third Rome of the prophets. I say that it at least carries in itself

the portent or possibility of that Rome. It might well be, indeed, if Italy's programme of industrial solution and her policy of international reconciliation should together prevail, that thus in Rome would rise, and rise equipped for divine conquest, that social sense which alone can vanquish the increasing Great Curse, and prepare the descent of that society which Saint John and Mazzini alike called the City of God : that heavenly society, stablished firmly upon the earth, wherein all men might at last enjoy the abundant life of that freedom, which, as Dante has said, "all upright governments have for their aim, and which is the greatest gift bestowed by God on human nature, and through which men attain to that joy which is as the blessedness of the gods."

It is between Moscow and Rome that Italy and the nations will choose, and choose soon, whether knowingly or unknowingly. For the choice is between universal dissolution, issuing from universal despotism, and the path to social salvation, which the Government of Italy has pronounced. If the super-capitalist intention to defeat the Roman programme succeed, then it is Moscow that will become the centre of the world : and the unity therefrom proceeding, super-capitalist as it will be in the end, sterilising as it must the soul of man, will destroy what of creative life still strives beneath the death now so deep upon the nations. But if Rome be the choice—if Italy herself choose first the programme put before her by her present Government ; if she consecratedly achieve the good issue of her whole adventure in concilia-

tion ; then it is not too much to hope, then it is not too much to expect, that her brave solution will hence lay compulsion upon the whole family of nations, bidding them partake of the new *Pax Romana* and be healed.

What the end of Italy's phenomenal errantry will be, either at home within her own borders or abroad in Europe, I cannot surely foresee. The forces of the Italian revival are not yet organised ; nor are they yet certain of the way they take ; and it is therefore impossible to predict positively their ultimate direction. But this I know : that the things for which Giolitti and his associates stand constitute the sole way of salvation before society. They thus confront Italy, in the most crucial moment in the history of mankind, with the supreme and crucial moment of her own history. Through the darkness of to-day and to-morrow, already depthless and altogether uncharted, hers is now the opportunity and the responsibility of shepherding the nations into the light of that commonwealth of man which her great voices have all announced. This opportunity and this responsibility seem like a final effort of God on behalf of the civilisation now existing. And, indeed, upon the success or failure of Italy's present Government, or of some new Government that shall be of the same spirit and shall present the same programme, may impinge the divine decision as to whether or no our civilisation's continuance be worth while.

